

# TEXAS ANIMAL HEALTH COMMISSION



## 2011 – 2015 AGENCY STRATEGIC PLAN

**As of  
June 18, 2010**

<b>Commissioner</b>	<b>Dates of Term</b>	<b>Hometown</b>
Ernie Morales (Chair)	09-06-2011	Devine
Randy C. Brown	09-06-2013	Lubbock
Reta K. Dyess	09-06-2011	Jacksonville
William Edmiston, Jr., D.V.M.	09-06-2013	Eldorado
Ken Jordan	09-06-2013	San Saba
Thomas G. Kezar	09-06-2011	Dripping Springs
Coleman Hudgins Locke	09-06-2015	Wharton
Charles E. Real	09-06-2013	Marion
Ralph Simmons	09-06-2015	Center
Mike Vickers, D.V.M.	09-06-2011	Falfurrias
Mark A. Wheelis	09-06-2013	Encinal
R.W. "Dick" Winters, Jr.	09-06-2013	Brady
Beau White	09-16-2015	Rosanky

# AGENCY STRATEGIC PLAN

FOR THE FISCAL YEARS 2010-2015 PERIOD

BY

TEXAS ANIMAL HEALTH COMMISSION

JUNE 18, 2010

<b>Commissioner</b>	<b>Dates of Term</b>	<b>Hometown</b>
Ernie Morales (Chair)	09-06-2011	Devine
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SIGNED:



Dee B. Ellis, D.V.M., M.P.A. Executive Director

APPROVED:



Ernie Morales, Commission Chair

# TEXAS ANIMAL HEALTH COMMISSION Strategic Plan, Fiscal Years 2009 – 2013

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# Pathway to Prosperity: Statewide Vision, Mission, and Philosophy

## **Statewide Vision**

March 2010

Fellow Public Servants:

Since the last exercise in strategic planning began in March 2008, much has changed in the national economic picture. States across the nation have struggled with severe budget shortfalls and the national economy has yet to rebound as many hoped and predicted. Texas, however, has weathered the economic downturn better than other states and been recognized as an example for other states to follow.

Our position relative to other states is not by accident. Texas has demonstrated the importance of fiscal discipline, setting priorities, and demanding accountability and efficiency in state government. We have built important reserves in our state's "Rainy Day Fund," cut taxes on small businesses, and emphasized a stable and predictable regulatory climate in an effort to show that the Lone Star State is a great place to build a business and raise a family.

Over the last year, families across this state and nation have tightened their belts in response to the economic challenges. Government should be no exception. As we begin this next round in our strategic planning process, we must critically reexamine the role of state government by identifying the core programs and activities necessary for the long-term economic health of our state, while eliminating outdated and inefficient functions. We must set clear priorities that will help maintain our position as a national leader now and in the future by:

*Ensuring the economic competitiveness of our state by adhering to principles of fiscal discipline, setting clear budget priorities, living within our means, and limiting the growth of government;*

*Investing in critical water, energy, and transportation infrastructure needs to meet the demands of our rapidly growing state;*

*Ensuring excellence and accountability in public schools and institutions of higher education as we invest in the future of this state and ensure Texans are prepared to compete in the global marketplace;*

*Defending Texans by safeguarding our neighborhoods and protecting our international border; and*

*Increasing transparency and efficiency at all levels of government to guard against waste, fraud, and abuse, ensuring that Texas taxpayers keep more of their hard-earned money to keep our economy and our families strong.*

I am confident we can address the priorities of our citizens with the limited government principles and responsible governance they demand. I know you share my commitment to ensuring that this state continues to shine as a bright star for opportunity and prosperity for all Texans. I appreciate your dedication to excellence in public service and look forward to working with all of you as we continue charting a strong course for our great state.

Rick Perry, Governor

## ***Statewide Mission***

Texas State Government must be limited, efficient, and completely accountable. It should foster opportunity and economic prosperity, focus on critical priorities, and support the creation of strong family environments for our children. The stewards of the public trust must be men and women who administer state government in a fair, just and responsible manner. To honor the public trust, state officials must seek new and innovative ways to meet state government priorities in a fiscally responsible manner.

*AIM HIGH...WE ARE NOT HERE TO ACHIEVE INCONSEQUENTIAL THINGS!*

## ***Statewide Philosophy***

The task before all state public servants is to govern in a manner worthy of this great state. We are a great enterprise, and as an enterprise, we will promote the following core principles:

- First and foremost, Texas matters most. This is the overarching, guiding principle by which we will make decisions. Our state, and its future, is more important than party, politics, or individual recognition.
- Government should be limited in size and mission, but it must be highly effective in performing the tasks it undertakes.
- Decisions affecting individual Texans, in most instances, are best made by those individuals, their families, and the local government closest to their communities.
- Competition is the greatest incentive for achievement and excellence. It inspires ingenuity and requires individuals to set their sights high. Just as competition inspires excellence, a sense of personal responsibility drives individual citizens to do more for their future and the future of those they love.
- Public administration must be open and honest, pursuing the high road rather than the expedient course. We must be accountable to taxpayers for our actions.
- State government has a responsibility to safeguard taxpayer dollars by eliminating waste and abuse, and providing efficient and honest government.
- Finally, state government should be humble, recognizing that all its power and authority is granted to it by the people of Texas, and those who make decisions wielding the power of the state should exercise their authority cautiously and fairly.

## **Statewide Goals and Benchmarks**

### **Natural Resources and Agriculture**

To conserve and protect our state's natural resources (air, water, land, wildlife, and mineral resources) by:

- Providing leadership and policy guidance for state, federal, and local initiatives;
- To maintain Texas' status as a leader in agriculture; and
- Encouraging responsible, sustainable economic development.

Benchmarks:

- Percent of regulatory permits processed while ensuring appropriate public input
- Number of animal disease outbreaks
- Number of food safety incidents from farm to fork
- Number of family farms
- Average time required in responding to natural disasters such as wildfires and hurricanes
- Average time required for producers to recover after natural or man-made disasters
- Percent contribution of agricultural sector to the gross state product

### **Economic Development**

To provide an attractive economic climate for current and emerging industries that fosters economic opportunity, job creation, capital investment, and infrastructure development by:

- Promoting a favorable and fair system to fund necessary state services;
- Addressing transportation needs;
- Promoting a favorable business climate; and
- Developing a well trained, educated, and productive workforce.

Benchmark:

- Per capita gross state product

The Texas Animal Health Commission is dedicated to protecting the health of Texas livestock, poultry, and nontraditional livestock and fowl. By promoting productivity and assuring continued marketability for Texas animal agriculture, TAHC shares in the statewide priority goals of conserving the state's environment and fostering economic opportunity.

# Texas Animal Health Commission Vision, Mission, and Philosophy

## ***TAHC Vision***

Through the cooperative efforts of the Texas Animal Health Commission, animal producers, and allied industry groups, the animal population of Texas is healthy and secure.

## ***TAHC Mission***

The mission of the Texas Animal Health Commission is:

- to protect the animal industry from, and/or mitigate the effects of domestic, foreign and emerging diseases;
- to increase the marketability of Texas livestock commodities at the state, national, and international level;
- to promote and ensure animal health and productivity;
- to protect human health from animal diseases and conditions that are transmissible to people; and
- to prepare for and respond to emergency situations involving animals

by conducting agency business in a responsive, cooperative, and transparent manner.

## ***TAHC Philosophy***

The Texas Animal Health Commission will carry out its mission with honesty, openness, and efficiency. We will use the best available resources, technology, and trained personnel to achieve the agency goals. We will listen to and respect the opinions and concerns of the people of Texas. We will encourage and promote open communication between all parties. We will strive to continuously develop new, or enhance existing relationships, among government, industry, and private citizens to realize our vision of a healthy and secure animal population in Texas.

# External/Internal Assessment

## I. Overview of the Agency Scope and Functions

### Agency Overview

In 1893 the Texas Legislature established the Texas Livestock Sanitary Commission to fight the tick fever epidemic which at that time had threatened to cripple the state's economy. In 1959 the agency was renamed the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC). Over time, the Legislature has expanded TAHC's jurisdiction and animal health responsibilities beyond cattle. The list of animal health programs and diseases that TAHC is tasked to control continues to expand. Today, TAHC works to prevent, control, and eradicate disease in Texas livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, and exotic fowl and its mission includes:

- protecting livestock and fowl from domestic, foreign, and emerging animal diseases;
- increasing the marketability of Texas livestock commodities worldwide;
- promoting and ensuring animal health and productivity;
- protecting human health from animal disease and conditions that are transmissible to people; and
- preparing for and responding to emergencies involving animals.

An increased awareness of the threat of emerging and foreign animal diseases or agroterrorism attack, as well as the impact of natural disasters on animals, has expanded the agency's role in emergency management. The Governor added TAHC to the State Emergency Management Council in 2001, to the Homeland Security Council in 2005, and the Critical Infrastructure/Key Resources (CI/KR) Committee in 2006. Because of the agency's expertise in animal health, the chief of the Texas Division of Emergency Management designated TAHC as the state's lead agency for all animal issues in emergencies – whether man-made disasters, acts of agroterrorism, or naturally occurring animal disease outbreaks. Animal health is specifically mentioned in the Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan (2010-2015) as a critical target. For that reason TAHC is the key agency in supporting the plan's objective number 2 – to reduce the vulnerability and threat to Texas animal agriculture production. TAHC will do so by addressing disease monitoring, biological incidents, threat reporting, disease introduction, and laboratory analysis as they relate to Texas animal populations. The agency is also tasked to assist local and regional jurisdictions in preparing for, responding to, recovering from, and mitigating damage from emergencies where livestock, poultry and companion animals are affected.

Animal agriculture generates more cash receipts than any other sector of Texas' agricultural economy, and is critical to economic prosperity in Texas. As published in USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) report titled *Texas Agriculture Statistics 2008*, the value of Texas live animal and meat exports in 2008 was approximately \$739.9 million with an additional \$341.2 million in hides and skins. Texas also exported \$266.1 million worth of poultry and poultry products in 2008, as well as \$21.8 million worth of dairy products. NASS reported \$11.696 billion as the value of Texas cattle and calves, \$129.9 million for goats, and \$87.9 million for sheep and lambs. Additionally, NASS reported \$78.4 million as the value of all hogs in Texas, \$62 million for chickens, \$460.3 million for eggs, and \$1.6 billion for commercial broilers. Texas ranked first nationally in:

- Cattle production – 13.6 million cattle and calves and 7.1 million feeder cattle
- Sheep production – 870 thousand sheep and lambs
- Goat production – 1.1 million goats
- Wool production – 4.2 million pounds

Although the NASS report does not provide statistics for exotic hoof stock production, or equine production, Texas is a national leader in production of those two groups as well.

As Texas hones its competitiveness in the global food market, TAHC programs support animal agriculture, by focusing on the control and eradication of domestic diseases and emerging diseases and/or pests such as brucellosis, tuberculosis, pseudorabies, and cattle fever ticks. The TAHC also ensures that the basic infrastructure is in place to reduce the risk of emerging and foreign animal diseases, and exotic pests. TAHC mounted comprehensive responses to recent outbreaks of Infectious Laryngotracheitis in commercial poultry, Avian Influenza in the Live Bird Market System, Malignant Catarrhal Fever in cattle, Contagious Equine Metritis, and Equine Piroplasmiasis in the Texas' horse population. While the response to Equine Piroplasmiasis is still underway, the other outbreaks were successfully dealt with and the affected industries were returned to disease free status. At the request of the Texas cattle industry, TAHC also developed and launched a combined interstate and intrastate program to control Bovine Trichomoniasis.

The Texas Animal Health Commission, as a livestock and poultry health agency, provides services to key groups which include: private practice veterinarians, cattle producers, cattle feeders, poultry producers, swine producers, exotic livestock and fowl producers, auction markets, livestock shows and rodeos, stakeholder organizations, equine producers and equestrians. As the lead state agency for animals-in-disaster issues, TAHC also serves companion animal owners, as well as livestock and poultry producers.

Texas has unique risks associated with its size and borders. A total of eight states share a border with Texas – four US states and four Mexican states. The Texas-Mexico shared border is approximately 1,248 miles in length. In addition, Texas has multiple land ports, sea ports, and international airports. Texas also imports more live animals than any other state, including approximately one million cattle per year from Mexico and approximately two and one half million cattle from other US states. Texas producers maintain within their inventories approximately fifteen percent of the national herd supplying approximately one third of the US supply of beef.

TAHC maintains a team of highly trained veterinarians, veterinary epidemiologists, inspectors, and a network of State-Federal Diagnostic Laboratories. TAHC works cooperatively with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and its subsidiary branches - Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). TAHC and USDA employees routinely work side by side in a cooperative relationship for most disease and animal health emergency programs.

TAHC Veterinarians and veterinary epidemiologists oversee the diagnosis, control, and elimination of diseases and assure appropriate tracing of the movement of exposed or infected animals to determine the origin of infection and minimize the transmission of disease. Animal disease surveillance is supported by the network of laboratories which are strategically located in the state.

## **Key Agency Functions**

Six key functions of the agency in addressing diseases and parasites in animals and emergency management are: (1) Prevention, (2) Surveillance, (3) Diagnosis, (4) Control, (5) Eradication, and (6) Emergency Management/Homeland Security.

### ***Prevention***

Preventing introduction or reintroduction of diseases through establishing and enforcing testing and certification requirements for entry of livestock and poultry into the state helps ensure that diseases which have been eradicated are not reintroduced, and that existing diseases are not continually reintroduced. Some other prevention activities include education of producers in disease awareness, aiding producers in development and implementation of biosecurity measures, and approval/utilization of vaccines and preventive management practices. In addition, TAHC works with USDA and other state's animal health agencies to aid in

implementation and evaluation of effective animal health programs in countries such as Mexico, to reduce the disease risk from imported livestock.

### **Surveillance**

The surveillance element or function is the most intensive of the six functions with respect to resources and personnel. Surveillance includes all activities designed and implemented to identify and locate any possible focus of infection or exposure to diseases of animal/poultry health significance in the livestock, poultry and exotic animal population. TAHC surveys animal populations for possible disease problems by collecting blood samples at livestock markets, on farms or ranches, and at slaughter plants. TAHC also analyzes third party test samples and specimens, identifies animals back to their herds of origin in various movement channels, and inspects the animals and/or samples collected for testing. Other surveillance activities such as testing in high incidence areas, collecting milk samples at dairies or dairy processing plants, collecting tissue samples at the time of slaughter, and working closely with commercial poultry operators who routinely perform disease surveillance and testing, all contribute to a strong surveillance element. Routine visual inspections and collections of external parasite specimens from livestock in feral swine concentration points, are important for early detection of an intrusion of a foreign animal disease or pest. Additionally, TAHC foreign animal disease diagnosticians investigate all reports of potential foreign animal diseases in order to achieve early diagnosis of a foreign animal disease, should it be introduced into the state. TAHC maintains a 24 hour "on call" phone service to support effective and rapid disease surveillance and detection within the state.

### **Diagnosis**

Once disease is suspected, a timely and accurate diagnostic procedure must be completed. It is critical that agency professional personnel carefully evaluate results of tests and examinations to differentiate misleading symptoms from actual disease. Intensive and thorough follow-up investigation to confirm or refute the existence of the disease in the targeted livestock operation is the essence of the diagnosis function. If the diagnosis of a regulated disease is confirmed, disease control and elimination procedures are discussed with the affected producer. Disease management plans are developed to achieve the desired results within a reasonable timeframe following agency guidelines or regulations, and with the least disruption to the owner's normal management or operating procedures.

### **Control**

When a regulated disease is confirmed, the agency acts to control the spread of the disease to other animals in the herd/flock and to other herds/flocks by limiting the movement of exposed or infected animals. Quarantines and hold-orders are the control measures for restricting infected, exposed, or otherwise suspicious livestock and poultry to a specific location. Written permits are then issued for movement and disposition of infected or exposed animals in a manner compatible with sound disease control practices. Usually the animals are permanently identified by tagging or branding as infected or exposed prior to movement. Vaccinations or other treatments, if applicable, are sometimes administered to exposed animals in order to minimize any further spread of the disease. If not completed as part of the diagnosis function, herd/flock plans are formulated in cooperation with the owner to improve management practices. Results of epidemiological studies are shared with the owner as to the most probable source of the disease and the methods to be used to eradicate and prevent reintroduction of the disease.

### **Eradication**

Elimination or eradication of the disease causing agent from the animal populations is the final element or function of a successful animal health program. Complete elimination or eradication of the disease causing agent may require a number of program elements to be successful. Those elements may include humane euthanasia of the affected animals, controlled biosecure slaughter and processing of exposed or infected animals to salvage the value of the products, and the subsequent support of business continuity actions when feasible. Various types of carcass disposal techniques may be utilized depending on the disease or condition. Adequate cleaning and disinfection of affected premises and equipment, as well as environmental applications may be necessary to ensure all disease agents, vectors, or pests have been eliminated.

## ***Emergency Management/Homeland Security***

TAHC's role in emergency management and homeland security activities continues to expand and is an important function performed by the agency, as it is charged to support all of the State of Texas and the Governor's Homeland Security initiatives as they relate to animals, including, but not limited to participation and support of:

- Texas Homeland Security Strategic Planning Initiatives
- Governor's Emergency Management Council activities
- Governor's Critical Infrastructure/Key Resources Committee activities
- State Emergency Management Plan and Annexes for Health and Medical Services, Evacuation; Mass Care; Animals, Agriculture, and Food and Feed Safety; Public Works and Engineering; Donations Management; and others
- Texas Hurricane Evacuation and Shelter Plan (animal care component)
- Texas Animal Issues Committee Plan
- Texas Animal Response Plan (for non-diseases – Appendix 4 to Annex O)
- Texas Foreign and Emerging Animal Disease Plan (Appendix 3 to Annex O)
- Texas local and regional response planning
- National Response Network and affiliated national emergency security initiatives,
- Coordination of all local, regional, federal, and industry plans with the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) plans
- Lead state agency for response to and planning for foreign animal (livestock or poultry) diseases
- Lead state agency for coordinating the response to disasters or emergencies involving companion animals/household pets
- Creation of local animal issues committees (AICs)
- Development of templates for community animal response plans (CARPs)
- Lead state agency for Department of Homeland Security Regional Resiliency Assessment Plans with industry(RRAP)

## ***II. Organizational Aspects***

### ***A. Statutory Authority and Composition of Workforce***

TAHC has specific statutory authority and responsibility to control and eradicate any disease or agent of transmission that threatens the livestock and poultry of Texas, as outlined in Chapters 161 through 168 of the Texas Agriculture Code, Vernon's Annotated Texas Statutes.

Thirteen Commissioners appointed by the Governor, representing all segments of the livestock, exotic livestock, and poultry industries as well as the public, oversee and guide the agency's activities. The Governor designates the Chair.

The Commissioners appoint an Executive Director who serves as the chief executive officer of TAHC and the chief veterinarian of the state of Texas. In concert with the Commissioners, animal producers, and allied industry groups, the Executive Director oversees Texas livestock and poultry regulatory functions to ensure that agency business is conducted in a responsive, cooperative, and transparent manner.

For the 2010 – 2011 Biennium, TAHC has an authorized workforce of 214 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs). Riders in the General Appropriations Act provide contingency authority for TAHC to add additional FTEs for programs related to animal identification or surveillance, control, or eradication of health pests or diseases, to the extent that federal funds are allocated for salary costs; none of these contingent FTEs count against the agency FTE cap. Included within the FTE cap are seven fully federally funded laboratory positions

serving the State-Federal laboratory system. TAHC is funded by a combination of state general revenue funds and federal funds, primarily from USDA.

The TAHC workforce is comprised of field inspectors, veterinarians, veterinary epidemiologists, laboratory personnel, emergency management planners and administrative staff. Although based in Austin, TAHC maintains a significant presence statewide with the majority of employees working in seven field “Regions” and four laboratories around the state.

Each Region is directed by a veterinarian and staffed with a supervising inspector, field inspectors and administrative support personnel. A field veterinarian, and a support field epidemiologist is also assigned to cover each region. All TAHC veterinarians – including the Executive Director – must hold a license to practice veterinary medicine in Texas. Field staff conducts livestock shipping and entry inspections to enforce entry requirements, conducts inspections at livestock markets and other facilities, collects tissue samples at slaughter plants, conducts on-the-farm, market and feedlot disease testing and surveillance, collects external parasites for laboratory identification, and responds to or supports all disasters affecting animals when needed. In addition, field veterinarians, epidemiologists, and animal health technicians employed by USDA collaborate with TAHC staff in animal disease prevention, surveillance, diagnosis, control, and eradication activities.

TAHC operates four laboratories jointly with USDA. Each lab is overseen by a directing microbiologist and staffed with technicians and/or microbiologists who perform high volume serological testing on blood and serum samples submitted by field staff or veterinarians for the brucellosis, pseudorabies, and tuberculosis disease control programs. The Lubbock laboratory also receives brucellosis slaughter surveillance samples from Arizona and NM; the cost for testing these samples is covered by USDA through a cooperative agreement for Out-of-State brucellosis testing. Of the approximately 3 million tests performed by the four state-federal labs in fiscal year 2009, approximately 2.8 million were for Texas and 400,000 for other states.

In addition, the Austin laboratory conducts bacteriology on milk and tissue samples collected from animals suspected of brucellosis and identifies parasites of animal health significance such as fever ticks, mites, and screwworms.

In calendar year 2009, the TAHC workforce was comprised of the following:

African American	Hispanic American	Caucasian American	Male	Female
5%	13%	82%	63%	37%

JOB CATEGORY	PERCENT OF TOTAL EMPLOYEES
Officials/Administrators	9%
Professionals	58%
Technicians	11%
Administrative Support	22%

## B. Organizational Structure by Strategy

TAHC’s budget structure supports two goals, one comprised of three direct strategies and the second comprised of three indirect strategies. The three direct strategies support the agency’s goal to protect and enhance the health of Texas animal populations, facilitating productivity and marketability while sustaining reduced human health risks. These three direct strategies are: (1) Animal Health Programs - Field

Operations, (2) Diagnostic and Epidemiological Support Services, and (3) Promote Compliance and Resolve Violations.

The agency's three indirect strategies support the three direct strategies listed above and are comprised of the following: (1) Central Administration, (2) Information Technology, and (3) Other Support Services.

### **Strategy 01-01-01: Animal Health Programs – Field Operations**

The core functions of the agency are performed by Animal Health Programs which include: Field Operations, Governmental and Industry Relations, the Animal Identification Program, Fowl Registration and Program Records. Leadership for TAHC Animal Health Programs-Field Operations is vested in the Assistant Executive Director for Animal Health Programs, a licensed veterinarian, who reports directly to the Executive Director. Included among these functions are records documentation and management activities which are essential to achieving the agency goal of protecting and enhancing the health of Texas animal populations.

#### Animal Health Programs – Field Operations

TAHC maintains a team of highly trained veterinarians, veterinary epidemiologists, inspectors, and a network of State-Federal Diagnostic laboratories. Veterinarians and veterinary epidemiologists oversee the diagnosis, control, and elimination of diseases and assure appropriate tracing of the movement of exposed or infected animals to determine the origin of infection and minimize the transmission of disease. Animal disease surveillance is supported by the network of laboratories which are strategically located to best serve the state of Texas industry and government.

The state of Texas is divided into seven “Regions”, each with a regional office managed by a veterinarian that reports to the Assistant Executive Director for Animal Health Programs. A “Supervising Inspector” is assigned to each Regional office and is charged with the responsibility of coordinating and supervising the work of the inspectors and administrative support staff. Livestock Inspectors are assigned to cover specific geographic areas and the Regional offices are staffed with, or supported by, a state Field Veterinarian who supports disease program functions and assigns testing duties to Inspectors. Federal field veterinarians from USDA Veterinary Services often collaborate with TAHC veterinarians and field staff if available. Ultimately, TAHC is responsible to assure that Texas meets animal disease prevention, surveillance, control, and eradication standards. Three main elements embody animal health program field operations functions – Animal Health Assurance, Animal Health Management, and Animal Health Emergency Response.

#### Animal Health Assurance

- Diagnose, control and eradicate domestic animal diseases
- Ensure effective disease surveillance activities
- Respond to animal health emergencies
- Provide public information and education services
- Monitor health certification of animal health populations
- Perform inspections at markets, slaughter facilities shipment checkpoints, livestock or poultry assemblies, and at other concentration points

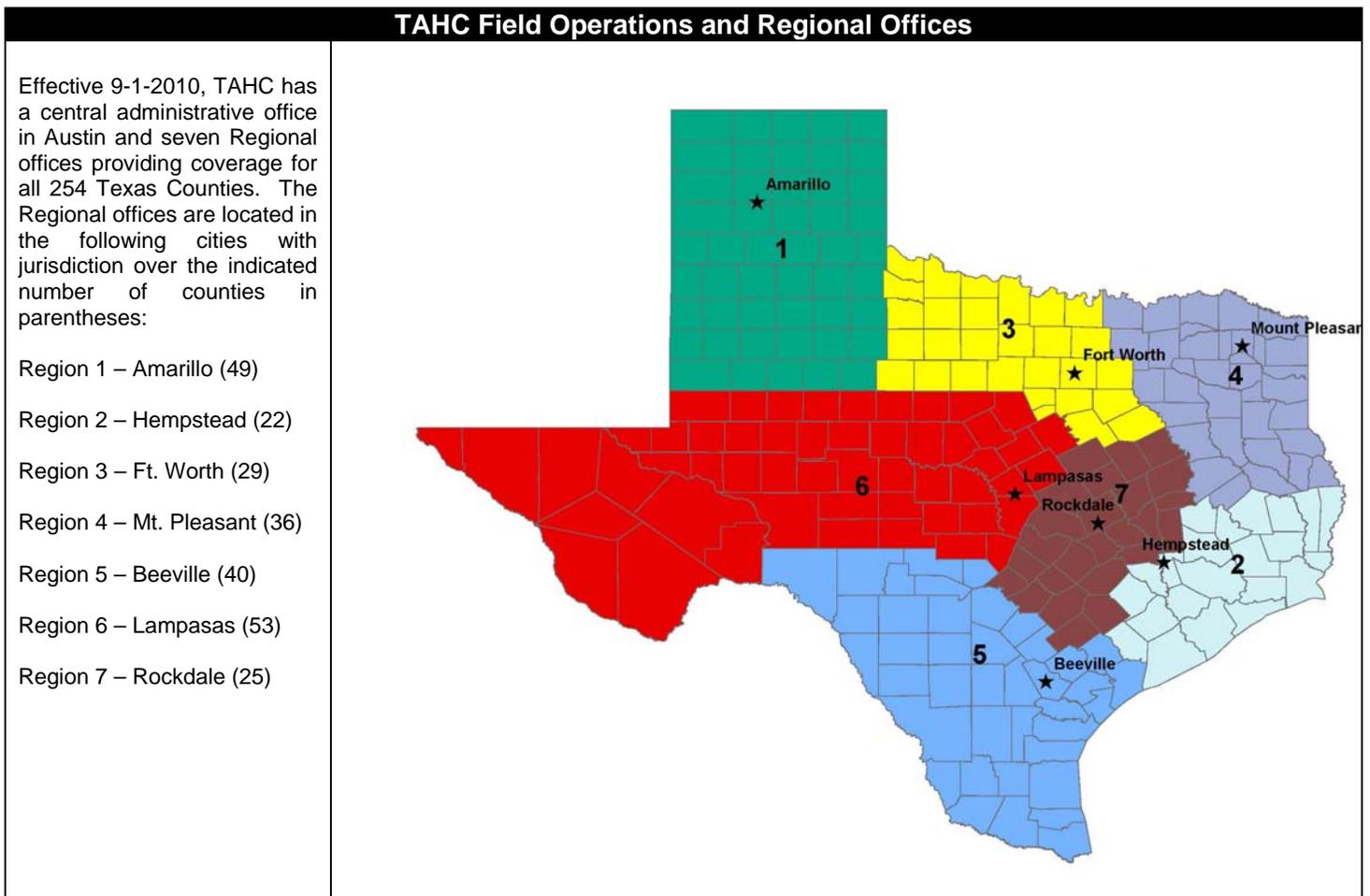
#### Animal Health Management

- Conduct animal disease surveillance, testing, inspections, exams, and control activities
- Diagnose, report and respond to foreign or emerging diseases
- Prescribe health requirements for interstate and international movement
- Enforce Texas interstate entry requirements and movement restrictions of at-risk animal populations
- Manage infected, exposed, or high risk animals, herds, or flocks
- Conduct surveillance for ectoparasites and manage infestations as required

- Enter data such as animal identification, owner information, health certificates, and test results from a variety of disease programs into national and agency level databases

Animal Health Emergency Response

- Lead state agency for Texas animal emergency response activities
- First Responder for Foreign and Emerging Disease (FEAD) Activities
- Member of State Emergency Management Council
- Member of Texas Homeland Security Council
- Member of Texas Homeland Security Critical Infrastructure/Key Resources Protection Council
- Facilitator/Creator of community (city and county) Animal Issue Committees
- Creator/maintainer of county livestock Emergency Evacuation Holding Facility Database



Governmental and Industry Relations

The Governmental and Industry Relations Specialist reports directly to the Executive Director and is responsible for:

- coordinating consistent communication with industry representatives, the legislature, legislative agencies, other state agencies, and professional organizations; and
- monitoring and responding to requests for information from the legislature, Legislative Budget Board (LBB), and the Governor’s Office and tracking state and federal livestock, poultry, and exotic animal legislation and regulation development.

### Animal Disease Traceability Program

On February 5, 2010, USDA announced a new, flexible framework for animal disease traceability in the United States.

The framework will provide the basic tenets of an improved animal disease traceability capability in the United States. The program will:

- Only apply to animals moved in interstate commerce;
- Be administered by TAHC to provide more flexibility;
- Encourage the use of lower-cost technology; and
- Be implemented transparently through federal regulations and the full rulemaking process.

Although USDA has a robust system in place to protect U.S. agriculture, USDA will also be taking several additional actions to further strengthen protections against the entry and spread of disease. These steps will include accelerating actions to lessen the risk from diseases--such as tuberculosis--posed by imported animals, initiating and updating analyses on how animal diseases travel into the country, and improving response capabilities. TAHC will work closely with Texas stakeholder organizations and USDA to help ensure compliance with the new interstate movement identification requirements as outlined above.

The ability to successfully trace an animal disease to its source is critical to the health and economic well-being of commercial livestock and poultry industries in Texas and the United States. Animal health officials require accurate and complete information to respond effectively to animal disease events and to successfully conduct disease surveillance programs. Rapid response minimizes the potential spread of contagious diseases, and lessens the detrimental effects of disease events. TAHC emergency response capabilities can be improved through greater standardization of the data elements needed for animal disease control programs

### Fowl Registration Program

The Fowl Registration Program is carried out by the agency field personnel, and primarily targets domestic fowl, such as chickens, turkeys, ducks, and game fowl raised for food, eggs, or agricultural exhibition. Dealers, distributors, or transporters of exotic or pet birds, however, must register if their birds are commingled or transported with domestic fowl, or are sold at the same public venue with domestic fowl. Fowl registration responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- performing inspections at markets, slaughter facilities, shipment checkpoints, fowl events or assemblies, and at other points of concentration of livestock and fowl;
- collecting and submitting diagnostic specimens as directed;
- assisting epidemiological investigations and conducting poultry disease investigations;
- issuing and verifying permits and providing general information to the public regarding the Fowl Registration Program; and
- identifying flocks that need to be registered and assuring their registration.

### Live Bird Marketing System

The Live Bird Marketing System (LBMS) is comprised of Live Bird Markets, Live Bird Market Production Units, and Live Bird Market Distributors. Rules were developed and implemented by TAHC in March, 2009, to reduce the risk of reportable diseases being introduced and circulating in the LBMS. Education efforts, enforcement of these rules, and surveillance sampling are carried out by agency field personnel. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- meeting with LBMS owners and managers to inform them of the recently implemented rules affecting their operations;
- working with LBMS owners and managers to develop customized Biosecurity Plans for each operation;
- collecting surveillance samples from birds, shipping crates, and the environment to test for Avian Influenza; and
- responding to disease outbreaks by quarantining, testing, and possibly depopulating affected flocks.

### Program Records

Program Records staff receive, input into databases and maintain records necessary to document specific state and federal disease eradication program activities; process documents affecting herd or flock status and documents related to quarantines or releases; perform data entry; and, provide permit support. Program Records responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- developing and maintaining data and records systems required for disease program standards;
- performing data entry so that data may be analyzed to monitor the accuracy and efficiency of the agency's disease management and eradication activities;
- managing records for the Fowl Registration Program, Fowl Surveillance program, Waste Food Feeder Registration, and Feral Swine Holding program;
- supporting records management functions for various Herd Status programs that include the Accredited Bovine Tuberculosis Free Herd, Bovine Brucellosis Certified Free Herd, Validated Swine Brucellosis Free Herd, Qualified Pseudorabies Negative Swine Herd programs, CWD Herd Status Plans for Cervidae and Trichomoniasis Free Herd status for cattle;
- issuing and monitoring Texas entry permit programs for domestic and exotic animals and fowl entering Texas from other states; and
- entering data such as animal identifications, owner information, health certificates, and test results from slaughter charts into the USDA database known as the Generic Database (GDB).

### **Strategy 01-01-02: Diagnostic and Epidemiological Support Services**

Two distinct elements comprise the organizational structure of this strategy: Epidemiology and Laboratory Diagnostics.

The elements listed above are designed to provide epidemiological and leadership expertise, serological testing, microbiological confirmation, and parasite identification services for diseases and parasite infestations of regulatory importance to the animal agriculture industries in Texas.

#### Epidemiology

The State Epidemiologist, one TAHC field epidemiologist and one USDA field epidemiologist provide epidemiology services, consultation, and oversight to Regional operations as needed to support to the various State-Federal disease eradication programs, and to support other TAHC disease management programs. Epidemiology responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- providing oversight and consulting support related to diagnostic and epidemiological activities prior to a definitive diagnosis;
- interpreting lab results and determining which animals are at risk for spreading disease;
- conducting, directing or leading epidemiological investigations of disease incidents to determine source and distribution of disease, as well as identification of potentially exposed animal populations;
- making recommendations for management of diseased herds for elimination of disease;
- coordinating and performing risk analysis in collaboration with field staff, other TAHC staff, USDA, and other entities to evaluate and analyze safeguards to mitigate disease risks to an acceptable level that supports the Texas livestock, poultry, and exotic animal trade;
- advising agency staff, Commissioners, and industry leadership on emerging and re-emerging livestock disease issues, including recommendations regarding implementation of disease control and eradication methods;
- assisting agency personnel in developing surveillance, herd/flock disease management plans, educational and diagnostics evaluation objectives;
- providing assistance to field personnel and educational and training experiences to professional, producer, student, and special interest audiences;

- providing consultation to field veterinarians and Regional directors regarding program herd/flock disease management procedures and the interpretation of standards and guidelines for classification of test results;
- identifying and providing recommendations on areas of deficiencies in surveillance, diagnostic, control, eradication, or prevention activities; and
- providing oversight and management of assigned agency disease control programs and serving as liaison with other state and federal agencies with respect to disease control programs.

### Laboratory Diagnostics

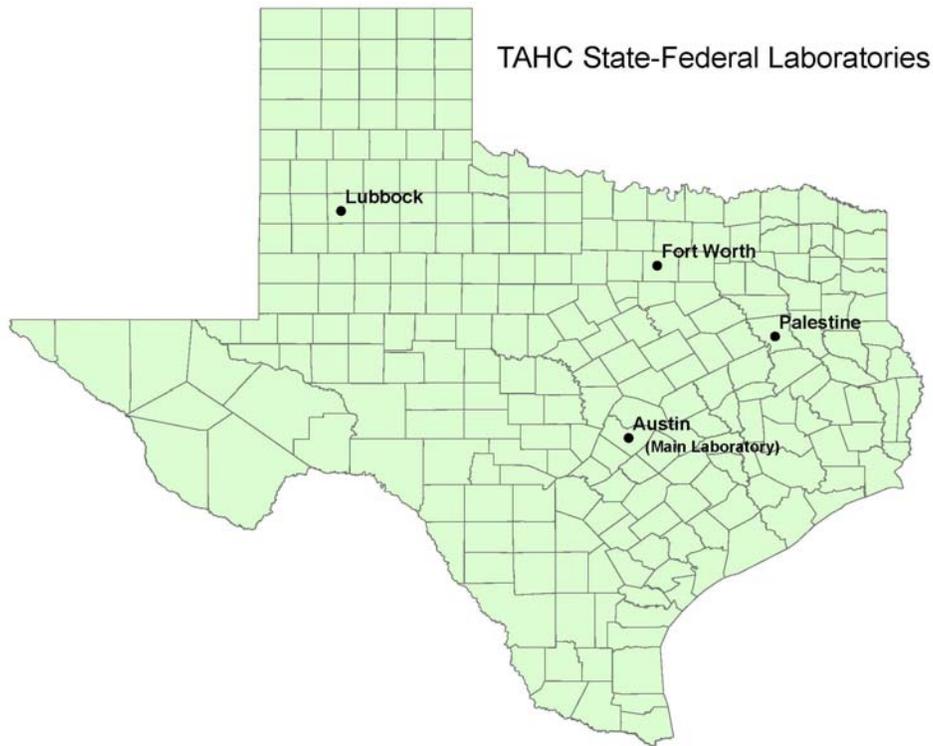
Four laboratories, located in Austin, Fort Worth, Palestine, and Lubbock, comprise the TAHC laboratory diagnostic strategy; the Director of Laboratories reports to the State Epidemiologist. Laboratory microbiologists and technicians conduct USDA approved serological tests to support cooperative programs for brucellosis, pseudorabies and tuberculosis control, thereby providing TAHC veterinarians and epidemiologists with scientific tools for diagnosing disease.

The main laboratory, located in Austin, is the only TAHC facility that has bacteriological capability. It is also unique in performing serological testing for bovine tuberculosis for cattle from Texas and many other states, as well as parasite (tick, mites and fly larvae) identification. The satellite laboratories in Fort Worth, Palestine, and Lubbock perform brucellosis serological testing on bovine and swine samples collected at livestock markets and slaughter plants in their region of the State. The Lubbock laboratory also receives brucellosis slaughter surveillance samples from Arizona and New Mexico; the cost for testing these samples is covered by USDA through a cooperative agreement for Out-of-State brucellosis testing.

In the course of state fiscal year 2009, the TAHC laboratory system processed over 3 million test samples and is a national leader in many aspects of brucellosis and tuberculosis testing; laboratory personnel continue to evaluate new technologies and procedures for efficacy and efficiency and apply them as they are approved. The laboratories employ daily internal quality assurance procedures and yearly external NVSL proficiency testing to conform with internationally recognized laboratory quality standards.

Laboratory responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- establishing and maintaining a quality control program for laboratory integrity and employee safety;
- ensuring protocols and procedures to maintain sample integrity throughout the testing process;
- determining specifications for supplies, and ensuring vaccine and other biological products are properly shipped per state and federal regulations;
- reporting serological results to producers and veterinarians in a timely manner;
- supporting agency responses to foreign animal disease outbreaks; and
- supporting Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory system as a surge capacity for response to a catastrophic foreign animal disease outbreak activating that lab system.



### **Strategy 01-01-03: Promote Compliance and Resolve Violations**

The Promote Compliance and Resolve Violations strategy is under the stewardship of the General Counsel who reports to the Executive Director. In addition to investigatory functions, included within this strategy and function are agency communications and public information.

#### General Counsel

The General Counsel is responsible for:

- providing legal counsel and representation to the Commissioners and Executive Director and the agency regarding all aspects of TAHC internal operations, state and federal programs, agency personnel matters, agency operations, contracts, and Historically Underutilized Business programs, and rulemaking;
- providing legal information to executive management regarding administering and interpreting laws and rules providing authority for, or, impacting animal health programs;
- providing legal support of agency enforcement matters;
- providing guidance and training to the Commissioners and agency staff on ethics, public information, and open meetings information;
- supporting the agency, Commissioners, and Executive Director by coordinating with the Attorney General’s Office in any potential litigation affecting those entities;
- providing legislative assistance to the Commissioners, Executive Director, Deputy Director for Administration and Finance, governmental relations staff, and other agency staff through legal advice, legislative and rule drafting, including legal analysis of federal and state legislation;
- conducting or coordinating administrative hearings;
- providing legal advice to the agency regarding open records requests and the Public Information Act, including preparing and processing requests for Attorney General Opinions, and providing advice to staff on whether or not documents may be released;

- providing legal support to the agency's Human Resources function and related activities; and
- serving as liaison for the agency to the State Auditor's Office, and the State Office of Risk Management.

### Legal Services and Compliance

The legal services and compliance function is performed in collaboration with field operations staff, the public, and other agency staff who report alleged violations to the general counsel or an agency investigator. The two agency investigators obtain written statements from parties involved in an investigation and file complaints in courts all over the state; a single legal assistant writes and distributes warning/demand/information letters. This investigatory and compliance function is responsible for:

- evaluating and investigating all alleged violations of agency requirements or complaints by field staff or from the public;
- receiving, reviewing, and investigating alleged violations of Commission regulations submitted by Field Operations staff on a Compliance Action Request (CAR) document;
- educating the public and TAHC staff on legal matters related to animal health programs;
- receiving, reviewing, and investigating complaints from the public;
- resolving minor infractions or offenses through warning letters; and
- initiating compliance action as appropriate including:
  - Actions handled through the filing of a Class "C" Misdemeanor in the Justice of the Peace Court (because the Commission has a number of Class C Misdemeanor provisions in statute, this is the avenue most frequently utilized to enforce compliance);
  - Actions involving a felony offense which require prosecution by local authorities. (In the past, the Commission has filed several felony cases for indictment for alteration of a government document); and
  - Actions handled through an Administrative Penalty process in which "Agreed Orders" are used to resolve issues.

### Public Information and Communications

Agency communications are led by the agency Public Information Officer, who reports directly to the Executive Director. The communications and public information function, which is included within the strategy of promoting compliance and resolving violations, is responsible for:

- serving as the first point of contact for media to help them secure accurate and timely information;
- coordinating informational requests of the general public who seek information and statistics about the agency or animal health programs;
- providing accurate, consistent information about the agency and its diverse and growing animal health programs in a timely manner;
- preparing and distributing press releases, newsletters, reports, and interviews;
- developing and maintaining animal disease information for agency website;
- assisting executive management in outreach efforts by preparing presentations, brochures, and informational materials for distribution with the public;
- maintaining extensive contact lists of industry stakeholders to keep them apprised of state and federal animal health programs and agency initiatives; and
- serving as co-chair and facilitating activation and utilization of the Texas Public Information Committee as detailed in the Texas Foreign and Emerging Animal Disease Plan (FEAD – Appendix 3 to Annex O).

## **Strategy 02-01-01: Central Administration**

The indirect strategy of Central Administration is comprised of four elements: Commissioners and Executive Director, Administration and Finance, Financial Services, and Human Resources.

### Commissioners and Executive Director

Thirteen Commissioners appointed by the Governor, representing all segments of the livestock industry and the public, oversee and guide the agency's activities, including approving agency rules. The Commissioners appoint an Executive Director who oversees all key functions performed by the Texas Animal Health Commission in carrying out its core mission for all direct strategies as well as for all indirect strategies.

### Administration & Finance

Administration & Finance is led by Assistant Executive Director of Administration, who reports to the Executive Director, and is responsible for all of the operational functions of the agency that indirectly support service delivery for all animal health programs. It is responsible for all financial management functions, including budget, accounting, purchasing, and other agency operating functions; the infrastructure needs of the agency, including office space, supply, printing, and postage; and the agency's information technology function, both in terms of computer hardware and the management of information technology software and applications projects. Administration & Finance is charged with:

- overseeing Financial Services, Staff Services, and Information Technology;
- administering and coordinating agency operations;
- providing support to the agency's strategic planning and appropriations processes (Agency Strategic Plan, LAR, AFR, Annual Operating Budget, etc.);
- providing leadership and coordination to the agency's business processes;
- defining, developing, and implementing standard agency operating policies and procedures;
- implementing and maintaining effective support systems to ensure efficient delivery of the agency's core mission;
- negotiating and planning with other governmental entities;
- establishing and maintaining a safe physical environment to carry out duties and responsibilities;
- providing a positive climate for professional growth and development;
- creating opportunities for staff involvement in policy development and decision making; and
- implementing procedures that provide for the continuity of agency functions in case of emergency or crisis situations.

### Financial Services

Financial Services reports to the Assistant Executive Director of Administration and is led by the Director of Financial Services who provides leadership and support to the budget and accounting staff. The goal of fiscal management is to process timely and accurate payments, to produce accurate and reliable financial information, to assist management in effectively allocating resources, and to ensure compliance with all state and federal rules and regulations – including adherence to generally accepted accounting principles. Financial Services is charged with:

- preparing biennial Legislative Appropriations Requests (LAR) and the itemized operating budget in accordance with the Agency Strategic Plan;
- preparing financial reports, including the Annual Financial Report (AFR), in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles per state and federal guidelines;
- managing the cooperative agreement process with the federal government to secure federal funding for animal health programs;
- managing and monitoring the agency's operating budget and the agency's authorized staffing and position summary;
- administering internal controls to ensure all payments to vendors, agency employees' salaries, benefits, tax deductions, and travel are processed in accordance with the General Appropriations Act and state and federal laws and regulations;

- maintaining control over cash and appropriation balances and ensuring funds are available in appropriations;
- managing quality control of USAS, USPS, and SPA to ensure data integrity; and
- providing executive management with monthly budget status reports including position summary reports.

### Human Resources

Human Resources reports to the Executive Director and is led by the Director of Human Resources who provides leadership and support for all human resources activities for the agency. Human Resources is charged with:

- recruiting highly qualified candidates and retaining a capable and committed workforce that is strategically focused to manage, monitor, and improve TAHC's capacity for excellence;
- directing, administering, and monitoring the agency's human resources policies, procedures, and programs and recommending solutions for human resources issues;
- ensuring agency human resources policies and procedures are compliant with state and federal laws, including but not limited to, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Texas Commission on Human Rights Act, the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, the Family Medical Leave Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the General Appropriations Act, and employment provisions of the Texas Government Code and the Texas Labor Code;
- recommending strategies and proposals to executive management regarding appointments, promotions, demotions, reclassifications, transfers, separations, and merit increases;
- counseling and advising staff on issues, rules, regulations, benefits, training and professional development, and all other areas of human resources management;
- overseeing the maintenance of human resources records and performing analysis and developing reports for use by executive management and federal and state oversight entities;
- administering the workers' compensation program;
- maintaining leave balances and records for all agency employees;
- performing central office receptionist duties;
- interpreting state leave policies and other state and federal human resources related laws and regulations;
- providing advice and assistance to staff regarding state and federal salary and leave administration policies and procedures;
- developing methods and procedures for gathering, compiling and analyzing statistical human resources data and ensuring the confidentiality and integrity of data entered into USPS;
- serving as liaison with the Texas Workforce Commission, the State Auditor's Office, the State Classification Office, and other state entities with respect to all human resources policies and issues; and
- listening to, recommending solutions for, or suggesting resolutions to personnel conflicts, disputes or grievances.

## **Strategy 02-01-02: Information Technology**

### Information Technology

Information Technology reports to the Assistant Executive Director of Administration and is led by the Director of Information Technology who provides leadership and support for overseeing agency information technology, including telecommunications, in support of the agency strategic plan and coordinating the entire spectrum of technical information services across the agency. It provides general policy direction for agency information and telecommunications resources management in coordination with executive management. Information Technology is charged with:

- providing leadership and management of the agency's telecommunications and information systems and support staff;

- providing oversight of the agency information security management and disaster recovery programs;
- providing support for all agency desktops, laptops, printers, and all other computer peripherals used by agency staff;
- providing telecommunications support and training to all agency staff;
- providing helpdesk and training support for all agency information and telecommunications resources;
- developing, managing, and maintaining physical databases so as to enhance software application performance;
- managing and maintaining the agency's network infrastructure;
- managing and maintaining all application and database servers, including the hardware as well as their operating systems;
- providing support and personnel to Disease Outbreaks and Emergency Response events and activities
- managing and maintaining the agency's electronic mail system including spam and virus control;
- performing regular backups of key agency electronic information;
- defining standard processes and methods in developing automated systems or new software applications and developing initiatives to increase efficiency by moving from paper-based data flow to electronic automated processes;
- preparing and coordinating the Information Technology Strategic Plan, Biennial Operating Plan, and IT Disaster Recovery Plan; and
- maintaining the TAHC web site for public outreach, education, and transparency purposes.

### **Strategy 02-01-03: Other Support Services**

#### Staff Services

Staff Services reports to the Assistant Executive Director of Administration who provides leadership and support for internal customer service, procurement and contracts, and infrastructure management. Staff Services is charged with:

- supporting the agency's purchasing, contract, and supply processes to ensure agency needs are met in a timely manner and are compliant with TPASS (including HUB Coordination), state, and federal regulations;
- managing the central office warehouse, supplies, tagged assets, including conducting Regional office inventories;
- disposing of surplus property and providing an agency recycling program;
- overseeing the agency vehicle fleet in compliance with TPASS, state, and federal regulations;
- providing statewide facilities support and space management;
- coordinating the receipt and distribution of mail, including receipts of revenue for certificates of veterinary inspection;
- managing the production and distribution of agency certificates of veterinary inspection;
- printing, reproducing, and assembling agency documents and publications;
- overseeing records retention and coordinating agency forms;
- ensuring the safety and security of agency staff and designating an agency Safety Officer;
- overseeing employee identification cards; and
- maintaining and updating the agency veterinarian database.

### **C. Demographics and the TAHC Workforce**

The majority of the TAHC workforce is headquartered outside large metropolitan areas where agriculture is the predominant way of life for rural Texans. TAHC livestock inspectors, veterinarians, laboratory staff, and Regional office support staff live and work alongside their neighbors, often in the same small town where they grew up with their families. Their personal experience in animal agriculture and close connections with the local community are contributing factors to the agency's success in:

- Recruiting job candidates with relevant skills and knowledge;

- Establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with producers, livestock markets, local law enforcement agencies, community service organizations, and other stakeholders;
- Maintaining a manageable turnover rate;
- Managing travel expenses; and
- Providing rapid and effective emergency response.

Over the past several years, the agency's responsibilities have significantly expanded into a growing number of new animal health programs, many of which are mandated by state and federal law, some of which were requested by the affected industry and all of which have significant real or potential impact on Texas' animal agriculture industries.

TAHC hopes that this strategic plan will provide additional visibility for the public to understand that, in addition to surveillance and control of traditional regulatory programs for Bovine Brucellosis and Bovine Tuberculosis, and surveillance, TAHC is engaged in many other animal health programs. The agency is charged to conduct other surveillance, control, and eradication programs (if located in the state), including but not limited to:

- Avian Diseases (e.g., Avian Influenza (AI), Exotic Newcastle Disease (END), Pullorum-Typhoid (PT), Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT)) and the Fowl Registration Program
- Swine Diseases (e.g., Brucellosis, Aujeszky's Disease (Pseudorabies/PRV), Classical Swine Fever (CSF)) the Waste Food Feeder Permit Program, and the Feral Swine Holding Facility Permit Program
- Equine Diseases (e.g., Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA), Vesicular Stomatitis (VS), West Nile Virus (WNV)) Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM), Equine Piroplasmiasis (EP), Fever Ticks( 14 day horse pass program) and Equine Herpes Virus 1(neurologic form – EHV-1)
- Sheep and Goat Diseases (e.g., Scrapie, Brucellosis, and Tuberculosis)
- Disease and pests of Exotic Livestock (e.g., Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), Brucellosis, Tuberculosis, and Fever Ticks)
- Texas Fever Ticks (livestock and Cervids)
- Anthrax in livestock
- Disease Surveillance and Reporting of Emerging Diseases and/or other Zoonotic Diseases
- Emergency Management (e.g., Animal Disease Preparedness and Response, Natural Disaster Preparedness and Response, and Agroterrorism defense)
- Laboratory, Epidemiology, and Diagnostic services
- Animal disease traceability system (under development)

To fulfill the agency mission of protecting and enhancing the marketability of Texas' \$10.9 billion/year animal agriculture industry, TAHC must:

- Recruit and retain highly qualified and well trained staff;
- Maintain adequate staffing and continue to focus on succession planning;
- Achieve salary parity with other comparable private sector, state agency and federal agency employers;
- Provide disease and species-specific training to employees and stakeholders as appropriate;
- Equip employees with the resources necessary to safely, rapidly and effectively respond to animal health emergencies;
- Maintain state-of-the-art laboratory technology and skilled staff;
- Develop replacement and refresh strategies for the agency information technology infrastructure and vehicle fleet; and
- Assure appropriate level and consistent general revenue funding.

Position classification changes made to the State Classification Plan during the last several legislative sessions have affected the salaries of a large percentage of TAHC's budgeted positions. As a result, previously established career ladders, mandated in the Texas Agriculture Code, Chapter 161.031(a), need to be modified, adjusted, or re-developed. This will be a challenging endeavor due to the agency's budgetary constraints and the required HR-to-staff ratio. TAHC has three FTE's, the HR Director, an HR Specialist, and a Leave and

Workers' Compensation Coordinator. Adequate internal HR support is needed to ensure that recruitment and retention strategies are tailored to the agency's diverse programs and mission.

Further details on the agency's strategies for human capital management in the future are included in Appendix E. An agency organizational chart that portrays both the agency's functional structure and strategic structure is provided in Appendix B.

### **III. Fiscal Aspects**

TAHC receives funding from both state and federal sources. In state fiscal year 2009, the agency operated on a budget of \$19.8 million; within this total, \$12.6 million were from the state's General Revenue (GR) Fund and \$7.1 million in federal funding and federal grant pass-through revenue, most of which came in cooperative agreements awarded by USDA. Cooperative funding from USDA is usually awarded for specific disease programs and typically is granted for one-year periods. Most of the USDA cooperative agreements do not align with the state fiscal year and they often do not align with the federal fiscal year. USDA changed the cooperative schedule in 2009 so that awards would begin on April 1 which meant that the TAHC had almost no federal funds for the majority of state fiscal year 2009. Federal cooperative funding is decreasing, as evidenced by the 13% decrease in overall cooperative funding for the TAHC in the 2010 cooperative year.

USDA contributes funding that supports TAHC's state-federal laboratory system which is not included within TAHC's appropriated budget. Some expenditures covered by USDA funds outside of TAHC's operating budget include, but are not limited to: courier service charges for sample delivery, supplies, test tubes, etc., RAP brucellosis testing costs, copier machines, and copy machine maintenance.

Adequate funding of animal health programs is essential to provide critical prevention, surveillance, diagnostic capabilities, and disease control or eradication activities. These activities are necessary to protect the Texas animal agriculture industry from disease risks and adverse financial impact and to meet national and international animal health standards. Basic infrastructure is crucial for preventing the introduction and dissemination of foreign animal diseases and pests, and preventing the re-establishment of previously eliminated diseases.

As described above, the TAHC is funded by a combination of state general revenue funds, federal funds provided through cooperative agreements with USDA, and minimal federal grant revenue from the Governor's Division of Emergency Management. The following information relates to these cooperative agreements and the potential for continuation of the funding.

<b>Federal Program</b>	<b>2009 Award</b>	<b>2010 Award</b>	<b>Future Funding</b>
NAI – Live Bird Markets	300,000	275,000	Expect continued funding at or below current level
animal disease traceability	619,000	450,000	Expect continued funding below current level
Brucellosis	1,900,000	1,404,116	Expect continued funding at or below current level for 1-2 years
RAP	130,000	127,000	Expect continued funding at or below current level
Scrapie	119,000	107,000	Expect continued funding at or below current level
Lab Surveillance	0	250,000	Expect continued funding at or below current level
Laboratory – TB	339,000	100,000-150,000	This award will vary on the number of samples tested

Federal Program	2009 Award	2010 Award	Future Funding
Swine Health	175,500	145,000	Expect continued funding at or below current level
Laboratory – Brucellosis	230,000	152,883.77	Expect continued funding at or below current level
Cattle Fever Tick	362,151	-0-	No indication of continued funding beyond current award
Homeland Security	200,000	62,000	No indication of continued funding beyond current award
FAD	93,052	83,000	Expect continued funding at or below current level
Tuberculosis	300,000	300,000	Expect continued funding at or below current level
Classical Swine Fever	233,300	176,000	Expect continued funding at or below current level

On February 1, 2008, Texas achieved Cattle Brucellosis Free status. A state must have zero infected herds for at least twelve consecutive months in order to achieve this status. Historically, as the majority of states achieve free status, funding (both state and federal) for that program decreases eventually. TAHC's federal brucellosis funding has decreased from a high of \$3.4 million in 1993 to the current \$1.934 million. Based on the national brucellosis program standards and the experience of other jurisdictions, Texas will need to continue brucellosis surveillance through first point testing at livestock markets for at least three more years and slaughter surveillance for many years after achieving free status. In addition to the direct funding shown above, the USDA has provided several million dollars per year in indirect support that does not flow through the agency's budget. This includes items provided directly to TAHC such as supplies, and equipment maintenance. A complicating factor in brucellosis surveillance, detection, and eradication is the growing prevalence of swine brucellosis in the feral hog population. Swine brucellosis infected feral hogs can transmit the disease to cattle they come into contact with, resulting in confusing cross-reactions on bovine lab blood tests for cattle brucellosis. It is anticipated that if market testing were halted, approximately 500 cattle herds per year would be investigated and tested due to the false reactions; again taxing much limited resources and imposing an economic burden on affected Texas cattle producers. Any further reduction in federal direct or indirect funding would result in a shortfall in funds for brucellosis surveillance, diagnosis, and disease eradication efforts. A possible result of any further state or federal reduction in brucellosis funds may be the cessation of brucellosis market testing earlier than the desired stopping point.

USDA is moving toward supporting fewer labs nationwide, with the remaining labs serving as regional labs and supporting larger geographic areas. TAHC is working with USDA to provide regional laboratory support to include brucellosis slaughter surveillance samples from other states and regional Tb testing(Gamma interferon) for many states. USDA currently provides a cooperative agreement to pay for 100% of the cost of TAHC's Lubbock laboratory which processes slaughter surveillance samples submitted by New Mexico and Arizona in addition to slaughter blood samples for west Texas and the panhandle region. If this funding is not maintained, this lab will be closed and the out-of-state samples will not be processed by remaining TAHC laboratories. The TAHC laboratory system could actually support more out of state testing and profit from the same if the agency were able to retain the fees collected from neighboring state testing, to pay for agency overhead costs.

Texas is still classified as TB free by USDA, with regard to bovine tuberculosis. However, tuberculosis detection and testing, especially in dairy herds, continues to require significant resources. A TB infected dairy herd was discovered in 2009, and a massive effort in epidemiologic tracing of animal movements and subsequent herd testing all over Texas and the US continues today. Bovine TB infections will continue to be discovered periodically in routine testing and surveillance, and the workload that ensues from any case is

substantial. Despite the uptick in TB activity related to the 2009 herd discovery, federal cooperative funding for this program is static and has not increased.

In 2009, the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) granted the TAHC limited funding for homeland security activities. The majority of this funding will be spent to upgrade agency rapid response equipment and communication capabilities (computer equipment for field deployment, enhanced communications capabilities, for responders and rapid response, specialized field equipment); to develop and enhance state and local response plans; and, animal issues planning and training. None of this funding will be spent on salaries.

In 2010, the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) granted the TAHC funding for homeland security activities. The majority of this funding will be spent as a pass through for Mobile Veterinary Assistance Team (MVAT) resource needs. The TAHC will work with the Texas A & M University's College of Veterinary Medicine (TAMU-CVM) to establish an MVAT to respond to animal related disasters. Once configured and capable, the MVAT(s) will deploy under the auspices of the TAHC and be a part of the Animal Response Team(s) in the field. The MVAT will generally work as a division or group under the Animal Issues Branch of the Operations Section of a state field incident management team (IMT). In some cases as the situation warrants, the MVAT will function as an operational branch of a stand-alone TAHC Animal Response Team. The needs for fulfilling this task will be met by purchasing mobile response vehicles, support and specialized veterinary equipment, supplies and materials, pharmaceuticals and communications gear to support the team while in the field. None of this funding will be spent on salaries.

Although Texas has large numbers of livestock, poultry, and exotic hoof stock, the commerce of the same animals and animal products is equally as important as herd size. With so much activity, Texas is potentially exposed to more foreign and emerging animal disease or pest incursions than any other state. Equine piroplasmiasis, a foreign animal disease, was discovered in south Texas in 2009 and is an ongoing concern for both future surveillance and control activities. Its introduction can be traced to both legal and illegal introduction of animals in Texas. In 2009, another equine foreign animal disease, contagious equine metritis (CEM), was detected as a result of the international movement of animals.

In poultry there was an outbreak of infectious laryngotracheitis (vaccine related) in central and east Texas in 2008 for backyard and commercial flocks. In 2009-2010, problems with non-H5/non-H7 avian influenza plagued chicken and duck producers as well as within the Texas live bird market system.

Cattle Fever Ticks and the disease they carry, Cattle Tick Fever (commonly called Texas Fever), was eradicated from the United States in 1943. To prevent re-establishment of fever ticks in Texas, a permanent quarantine zone has been maintained in Texas since that time to prevent reintroduction of fever ticks from Mexico, where both the fever tick and the disease Cattle Tick Fever are prevalent. USDA maintains a force of fever tick inspectors charged with preventing introduction and re-establishment of fever ticks in Texas. The state is currently experiencing a significant fever tick outbreak that began in 2004 and is ongoing. At the end of May, 2009 over 145 premises were under quarantine, many in the "free" area of Texas. This is the highest number of infested quarantines since the mid 1970s. Additionally, wildlife hosts are playing a significant role in expansion of the fever tick outbreaks. Border security issues have also allowed the illegal movement of animals into the state as well as people who may physically transport ticks for short distances on clothing inadvertently. TAHC and USDA are currently reviewing the fever tick program to identify potential options for containment and eradication of fever ticks from Texas

TAHC implemented bovine trichomoniasis regulations at the request of the Texas cattle industry that affect any producer buying, selling or shipping test-eligible bulls within or into Texas. These disease outbreaks, and the subsequent commitment of significant amounts of agency personnel time and resources, have all taken place in addition to the regular performance of programmatic disease surveillance and control/eradication. New diseases do not come with immediate budget support at the federal or state level, but ultimately require fiscal accountability. Newly emerging diseases, newly introduced diseases either legally or as a result of border

security issues, and the development of new disease programs at the request of the affected industries are an ongoing challenge for the TAHC to appropriately respond with the appropriate staff and equipment.

## **A. Capital Authority – Capital Strengths and Weaknesses**

A general strength over this last biennium, with respect to previous years, has been the ability to make capital purchases at all. A general weakness in TAHC's capital authority is the funding mechanism behind the granted capital authority; it drains agency program disease efforts by reducing the amount of cooperative funding available for cooperative disease programs. While the capital authority is much needed, the funding mechanism is not sustainable.

### ***Homeland Security Grant Funding***

The TAHC has received three small Homeland Security grants, for purposes of enhancing emergency preparedness and response. These grants have allowed for otherwise unfeasible purchases of dual purpose communications equipment and animal handling equipment. All of the aforementioned equipment has been and will be used in emergency response, but devices such as VHF radios can also be used in TAHC compliance (roadblock) efforts, testing of large dairies, and disease outbreak situations. Portable corrals that can be used in hurricane response can be equally useful in everyday field work for large animal testing. Additionally, generators and portable equipment and shelters can be set up for both natural disaster and disease disaster response.

Grant funding however is highly unpredictable despite the TAHC staff's best efforts to apply for all applicable opportunities, and cannot be relied upon as a sustainable capital goods funding source for the agency.

### ***Information Technology Refresh***

Capital funding for investment in automation must continue to be a priority to keep the agency technologically current. Recent emergency response activities have demonstrated the need for a more robust geographic information system (GIS) to aid the agency with its disease surveillance, control, and eradication work as well as natural disaster emergency response. Agency management continues to face the challenge of maintaining and improving agency information systems with limited resources.

For FY2010 and FY2011, TAHC was provided capital budget authority with the funding contingent on the receipt of earned federal funds in excess of the amounts specified in Article IX, Section 6.26. This funding has allowed TAHC to begin the process of replacing computer equipment. As TAHC develops its Legislative Appropriations Request during the summer of 2010, it will seek capital authority in order to support the continued lifecycle replacement of technology.

### ***Vehicle Purchase***

Unlike many other state agencies which also have considerable field activities TAHC has never been able to acquire the resources necessary to provide a fleet of vehicles to all field staff. By leveraging federal funds, TAHC has developed a fleet of 28 vehicles, 19 of which are at the end of their life-cycle per TPASS guidelines (6 years or 100,000 miles) and the remaining vehicles are over 50,000 miles. Staff Services ensures regular maintenance is performed and the agency intends to keep each vehicle in service as long as it is cost effective and safe to do so. Although TAHC has 28 vehicles in its fleet, approximately eighty-five field employees are not assigned such a vehicle and drive their personal vehicles to conduct agency business; in state fiscal year 2009, approximately 1.2 million miles were driven by agency staff in personal vehicles in order to perform their regulatory functions and duties across all 254 counties in the state.

Historically, agency vehicles cost approximately ten cents less per mile to operate than reimbursement for personal vehicles used in state service. However, the cost efficiency is based on the life of the vehicle and the agency acknowledges that vehicle acquisition requires significant upfront resources, and capital authority. For the fiscal year 2010 and 2011, TAHC was provided capital budget authority with the funding contingent on the receipt of earned federal funds in excess of the amounts specified in Article IX, Section 6.26. This funding has allowed TAHC to begin purchasing of additional vehicles, however, TAHC needs additional capital authority and funding to facilitate a replacement strategy for retiring and replacing aging vehicles or to increase the TAHC fleet size.

### ***Fever Tick Equipment***

The 2010-2011 GAA allocates a capital budget for fever tick control items. This is one year's worth of funding for a long-term tick eradication program. The program has benefited from it, but it is inadequate to meet the ongoing needs of the agency with regard to cattle fever tick eradication. The agency will request this funding be continued and enhanced if possible to continue the fight against the pest.

## **B. Non-Capital Fiscal Concerns**

### ***Compensation***

TAHC continues to struggle to be competitive in the marketplace and to provide career advancement opportunities to staff at all levels of the agency. The median salary of the agency staff is considerably lower than other comparable state or federal agriculture agencies. TAHC veterinary salaries must also compete with the Texas A&M University system and USDA APHIS Veterinary Service salaries, and are not competitive at this time. Career ladders for agency non-managerial positions need to be instituted throughout the agency, allowing predictable advancement opportunities based on measurable job performance criteria. Existing career ladders must also be maintained. With expanding needs from agency stakeholders state-wide, more and more is being demanded of TAHC staff every day. Meeting these expanding needs requires effective and efficient work performance from all employees. Retaining skilled and knowledgeable personnel is critical, and often requires compensation based on the demand for increasing performance and expanding job duties.

### ***FTE Allocation, Funding Disparity***

A prominent issue that the TAHC faces now and in the future is the disparity between the number of FTEs that TAHC has been allocated, and the funds that are realistically available to fill these FTEs. The 5% budget cut of the 2010-2011 biennium, the decrease in federal cooperative funds, and the expansion of job duties due to animal agriculture needs and disease outbreaks has crippled the agency's ability to remain fully and competently staffed. Workforce attrition and 'making do' with understaffed departments has temporarily allowed for the reallocation of funds that should be dedicated to workforce maintenance, and to a combination of expanded disease program expenses but instead was used to offset state/federal budget cuts. This imbalance is certainly not viable in the long term, and threatens to undermine the effectiveness of the agency as a whole at a time when demands for its functions are at an all time high.

### ***Training***

Training is paramount for maintenance of a competent workforce, especially in the face of rapid programmatic and technology changes and employee turnover. In the name of efficiency and effectiveness, agency personnel are constantly being asked to adopt and use new technologies, whether it be a new piece of software or a device that aids in electronic capture or processing of information. Workforce training that pertains to agency programs, maintaining customer service, and developing effective employee management skills are very important to TAHC ability to achieve its stated agency mission. Currently, no budget for training exists, and the funding for any training that takes place is removed from another budget index. The TAHC needs the funding to develop and support regular training programs on a variety of professional and personnel related issues.

### **Compliance**

The TAHC compliance staff consists of two field compliance officers, the agency's legal counsel, and a legal assistant. The compliance officers assist all TAHC regions with animal health regulation compliance issues, and cover all 254 counties in Texas. With only two field personnel committed to compliance, there is no way for the agency to adequately interdict and process illegal animal movements or resolve a plethora of outstanding violations. With such a long land border with Mexico, animal smuggling and potential disease transmission is a current reality that is not being adequately addressed. Continued development of the TAHC legal department is critical to the overall TAHC success in mitigating the expanding border security issues in South and West Texas, as well as adequately training the entire TAHC field staff to help support TAHC animal health regulations statewide.

### **Changing Nature of Workload Driving Staffing Issues**

TAHC must continually evaluate the ratio of inspectors to veterinarians. While veterinarians command a higher salary, there are many tasks that can only be conducted by these animal health professionals. Veterinarians can perform all the duties expected of lay inspectors; however, lay inspectors cannot perform some of the duties of veterinarians. Both skill sets are needed, and it is critical that the agency be able to recruit, train and retain sufficient veterinary staff to meet the demands of the future. TAHC veterinary salaries are not competitive with the current job market.

### **Cattle Fever Ticks**

The cattle fever tick program continues to pose challenges from both a logistical and fiscal standpoint. The majority of the current program personnel are USDA employees, but TAHC currently has 9 full time temporary inspectors assisting in the response efforts in South Texas. The funds for the temporary employees came from money allocated to the TAHC in the 81<sup>st</sup> Legislative session and from a one-time USDA "pass through" cooperative agreement. TAHC maintained a "tick force" until the early 1980s, at which time, through mutual agreement with USDA, the agency turned over most duties regarding tick control to USDA. Unfortunately, USDA resources have not been sufficient to either prevent introduction of fever ticks, or eradicate outbreaks in recent years. TAHC and USDA management are currently re-evaluating all aspects of the program including field implementation of current policies and changes to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the eradication efforts. It is feasible that a TAHC permanent "tick force" may need to be re-established if progress is not substantive and immediate, to fully protect the marketability of the Texas cattle population.

At minimum, it is critical that the additional fever tick funds allocated in the previous legislative session are maintained. Additional state resources beyond previous funding may also be necessary to eliminate and manage the current incursions of fever ticks in the "Free" zone of Texas. An enhanced TAHC response would allow USDA employees to concentrate on protecting the nation's border by "riding" the Rio Grande River area more consistently, and managing outbreaks in the permanent quarantine zone. TAHC and USDA will closely monitor this situation throughout 2010, and collaborate with appropriate stakeholders to determine if additional state funds should be requested during the 2011 legislative session. If requested, agency needs may include funding for personnel, equipment, treatment products and general operating expenses.

### **Information Technology Support**

The role of technology in relation to accomplishing TAHC's mission has grown dramatically. With the introduction of devices such as smartphones (Blackberry), Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for mapping, and Radio Frequency Identification of livestock, technology support issues have grown significantly over time. As directed by the 80<sup>th</sup> Legislature, the TAHC web page now enables constituents to access audio recordings of agency Commission meetings. In addition, the ADA compliant web page provides information to the public seeking TAHC mission-oriented information. Inspectors across the state primarily use e-mail as their

significant, if not primary, form of communication. With the added responsibility of Emergency Management, TAHC has created custom software to assist in the event of mass evacuations. TAHC has approximately 75% of its staff stationed across the 254 Texas counties; this requires significant travel to resolve technology issues.

### **C. Use and Anticipated Use of Consultants**

TAHC has not used consultants in the current biennium, and does not anticipate any need for consultants in the coming biennium.

## **IV. Technological Developments**

The 80<sup>th</sup> Legislature provided the first general revenue capital budget authority granted to TAHC in five years. With this funding, TAHC has begun to address issues related to the State Auditor's Office recommendations and Texas Administrative Code Chapter 202. TAHC is now updating and refreshing aging computers, servers, and software. Security issues are also being addressed. The TAHC computing environment is changing to catch up to the complex and expanding information environment of Texas state government.

### **A. Impact on Current Operations**

The life-cycle replacement policy for aging servers and personal computers matches industry standards; however, funding has not been sufficient to fully realize this replacement policy. Full implementation would reduce the down time caused by "worn out" old computers, resulting in greater productivity for TAHC staff. The TAHC Central Office Apple Macintosh server environment has been replaced with a Linux-based and Windows server environment. Server maintenance and repair costs have been reduced with the replacement of these obsolete servers.

Most TAHC computers were acquired with a one-time Homeland Security grant from the USDA and went into service during 2004. Many TAHC laptops are utilized in a rough and dirty field environment, which results in a high equipment failure rate. A high percentage of hard drive and LCD screen failures were occurring. In FY 2008, TAHC replaced fifty-eight of the approximately 220 agency computers. In FY 2009, TAHC replaced ninety-six computers. At the present funding level, the full refresh will require at least four years. A 4-year refresh will mean that the last laptops to be refreshed will be 8 years old.

Blackberry smartphones are now employed by the agency. These smartphones assist with daily animal health program communications, disease and disaster communications, and provide improved remote availability of staff to assist and serve the regulated community.

Computer-based and web-based training is a cost-effective means of enhancing the knowledge and skills of employees. Employees have gained confidence and proficiency in the use of the Internet, and are now using it as a tool not only for career development, but also for accomplishment of assigned job duties and communicating with others.

USDA developed computer-based training relative to emergency management. All agency staff has completed two training modules – (1) National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) and (2) Incident Command System (ICS); agency participation and completion in these two training modules was TAHC's first step in implementing the US Department of Homeland Security's National Response Plan (NRP). All newly hired staff are required to complete the training as well. Agency staff is now in the process of completing ICS 800 (National Strategic Framework) using a web based training module required of all "first responders".

TAHC staff provides information to the public on a variety of animal health issues. The use of PowerPoint presentation software and digital projection has made that activity much more effective, allowing staff to create

professional presentations for a wide variety of audiences. A mailing list email server has allowed TAHC to provide immediate communication of agency news and animal health information to the public at large.

Global Positioning Systems (GPS) data provides an important tool for emergency planning and response, epidemiology, and coordination with other state, federal, and local government agencies. TAHC field personnel have received training in the use of GPS units and TAHC has begun to collect and use GPS location data as part of its disease management strategies.

Updated licensure for the TAHC Geographic Information System (GIS) has assisted with the Tick Outbreak in South Texas. TAHC generated GIS maps are referred to in organizing and planning Tick surveillance activities.

TAHC has installed, for the first time in its history, an Internet/Network firewall. This prevents "Cyber attacks" from being effective. Security is a primary focus for the Department of Information Technology. While no Computing system is ever 100% secure, implementation of the firewall has been a significant step forward in protecting TAHC data.

## **B. Impact of Anticipated Advances**

The agency is working on projects that capture and upload Radio Frequency Identification tag data for livestock. With funds provided by the USDA, TAHC is acquiring and deploying mobile handheld units, mobile software, and RFID scanners, which enable disease tracking by identifying animals tested for brucellosis, tuberculosis, pseudorabies, equine infectious anemia, Johne's disease, and transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, or treated for fever ticks. The mobile RFID system has also helped inventory dairy herds and track fever tick progression in South Texas.

TAHC has replaced its Open Source POP3 email server with Microsoft Exchange. This upgrade has facilitated meetings with remotely located employees and has allowed employees to manage their work more efficiently. A Blackberry Enterprise Server has been installed to provide remote access to agency email, employee directory, and calendars to field staff and travelling employees.

The agency is investigating additional Geographic Information System capabilities to enable a quicker, more accurate response to disease outbreaks. A new GIS server has been purchased and will help consolidate all agency mapping data into one central location. The new GIS server system will also make the GIS data available to agency employees regardless of their location.

## **C. Extent of Automation and Telecommunications**

TAHC's network allows the transfer of data between multiple locations and hardware platforms. Tape backups of remote and local servers occur each day on the backup server located in the TAHC Austin office.

The Austin office server environment consists primarily of PC-Compatible servers running the Red Hat Linux and Microsoft Windows Server operating systems that are connected to the office network and are accessible to the public internet via DS-3 circuit provided by the State of Texas network (DIR). The agency Regional office servers are Microsoft Windows Servers that provide local network and file services.

Remote employees access internal agency resources through a Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection to the Central Office. The remote employees use a broadband wireless connection, personal home network, or a dial-up modem connection to access these resources.

The Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR) provides the data network backbone and is the Internet Service Provider for all TAHC office networks. This allows TAHC to communicate with agency Regional offices, other agencies, and other entities across the state, nation, and globe. Through the DIR Wide Area Network

(WAN), TAHC connects to a wide variety of both State and Federal computer systems and to the Internet. Automation of data dumps from state and federal agencies allows the agency to keep its information systems up-to-date, provide free and fee-based services to the public, and make available agency information to employees to conduct their daily tasks. These connections allow the agency to offer services to persons outside the TAHC offices via the World Wide Web.

TAHC's external Internet webpage provides information and links to information of interest to the citizens of Texas and to the industries the agency serves. This information includes office locations and phone numbers, contact information, news releases, regulations, and statutes. The agency also maintains an internal Intranet webpage that provides access to employee e-mail, agency animal health databases, agency forms, and internal communications to TAHC staff. Most agency documents, forms, and handbooks are available in electronic format on the Intranet. Employees can access information quickly without maintaining paper copies. Laboratory results are reported to Regional offices via e-mail, reducing mail and telephone costs, while speeding up the notification of results. TAHC has toll-free "800" numbers to the central office and all Regional offices for easy public access.

Aging telephone systems in regional offices are being replaced in FY2010 and FY2011. These systems are 15 to 20 years old. The equipment is failing and/or replacement parts are difficult to source and purchase. Approximately half of the agency phone systems have been replaced in the past four years. New telephone systems with Voice over IP (VOIP) capability are being purchased and installed in these regional offices. While TAHC is not moving to VOIP at this time, purchasing VOIP-capable equipment will ease the future migration to VOIP. The Austin office phone system is reaching its end-of-life also, and will have to be replaced in the coming fiscal years.

## **D. Current Hardware and Software Environment**

### **TAHC Server Hardware Environment**

TAHC's computing environment has made progress since the last legislative session. The agency has replaced the majority of agency servers through the life-cycle replacement process. A mix of Red Hat Linux servers and Microsoft Windows servers now provide essential network, file, web, directory, remote access, and other services to the agency and public in general. Each TAHC Regional office and laboratory has a Microsoft Windows server that provides local network and file services. Each agency office network and server is self-sufficient and would not be impacted if another office network or a centralized service like directory services went down.

A new centralized GIS server system is being deployed in FY2010. It will provide mapping services to employees at any location. It will provide mapping services for veterinarians tracking disease outbreaks and emergency response planning as well.

The agency database systems and hardware have been upgraded to keep up with current database design trends and current platforms. Obsolete database system hardware is being end-of-life'd and the databases on those systems are being moved to the new database platform. This has required a rewrite of several agency databases. The agency database plan is to use Unix Open Source products that allow web-based access to databases. Agency employees will have access to these databases at any location.

A Filemaker database system that has been in place at TAHC for over 10 years needs to be replaced. It is running on an obsolete version of Filemaker on an obsolete Mac server that will be difficult to support if current staff leave the agency. In addition, the cost to upgrade the software outweighs the benefits provided by it. The databases need to be rewritten and moved onto currently supported databases platforms.

A new inventory system will be purchased to help manage all equipment inventory for this agency. The agency needs an inventory system that can be managed by Information Technology and Staff Services but delegate the inventory collection activity to the Regional offices and laboratories. A barcode inventory tag will be used. The new inventory system will reduce travel time by Staff Services to Regional offices and laboratories for this annual activity. It will also reduce the time taken to inventory all of the agency equipment.

## **TAHC Software Environment**

The agency client computers have installed Microsoft Windows XP and Microsoft Office 2007 productivity suite. In FY 2008, TAHC purchased a Microsoft Volume License Agreement for the Office productivity suite, Microsoft Exchange email system, and Windows operating system. The MVLA is renewed every year in August. TAHC plans to upgrade client computers to Windows 7 in FY2010 and FY 2011. Microsoft Windows 7 will allow the agency to more easily adopt new hardware devices out in the field to track animal diseases and handle emergency responses. TAHC purchases additional specialized software as required by the different departments. For example, the field employees require Adobe Reader, Street Atlas, Google Earth, and USDA-provided software. The Public Information office and IT staff require licenses for Adobe graphic and forms software, Microsoft Project and Visio, and database-management software.

Most of the software applications used by TAHC's core animal health programs were custom applications developed internally many years ago. Although the applications and database systems are maintained, they cannot be upgraded to better utilize current technology and tools. Many of these custom applications were beyond their life cycle and have been rewritten to resolve issues of outdated tools, client OS incompatibility, or the need for greater functionality. TAHC presently has three primary databases: MySQL, Microsoft SQL Server, and Sybase.

TAHC's goal is to provide agency database access that is operating system agnostic and does not require the use of one operating system version to use these database systems. To that end, database access is now available through the agency Intranet web site. PHP & Java applications provide access to these databases.

## **Geographic Information System (GIS)**

Presently, TAHC owns a GIS workstation, plotter, Arcview software license, and maps stored on a portable hard drive. Addressing updated and sufficient equipment issues is important to a well-defined emergency response. Emergency Management is the driving force to improve GIS resources for TAHC. As funding becomes available, various initiatives will be addressed.

TAHC has through federal grant monies purchased a ESRI server license, server hardware, and a Microsoft SQL database backend that will centralize all agency mapping initiatives. Additional purchase of licenses for ESRI ArcView and ArcEditor will allow the further expansion of mapping capabilities and support throughout the agency. Additional TAHC employees will be trained to create maps and manage the centralized map data.

## **Desktops, Laptops, and E-Mail**

In late 2003 and early 2004, the agency was able to utilize one-time Homeland Security funding from USDA to convert from an Apple Macintosh desktop environment to a PC desktop environment. This funding did not allow for a life-cycle replacement program. Nor was capital authority available to facilitate the purchase of new equipment. With capital authority being granted by the 80th legislature, the process of upgrading computing hardware and software was begun.

The TAHC authorized employee limit is 209 employees. In late 2003 and early 2004, TAHC purchased approximately 180 laptop and desktop computers. TAHC has begun the process of lifecycle replacing ninety-five percent of its laptops and desktop computers. In FY2008 and FY2009, all laptops were replaced. In

FY2010, all desktop computers will be replaced. A life-cycle replacement process for all of these computers will be in place due to the increase in the IT capital budget.

With the purchase of the Microsoft Volume License Agreement, an Exchange email system was deployed in FY 2009. Outlook and WebMail are available to agency employees to read and send email. A hardware unit that provides anti-spam and content-filtering was also installed. A Blackberry Enterprise Server was deployed in FY2009 and provides remote access to email and calendaring to our agency Blackberry smartphones. Other brands of smartphones can connect to our email and calendaring systems through Active Sync.

TAHC has adopted smartphones as the preferred communication tool for data and voice. It is essential to reach employees during emergency response activities and disease outbreaks.

## **TAHC Network Hardware Environment**

Currently, all Regional office and laboratory network hardware (i.e. router) is aging and has not been incorporated into a network equipment life-cycle replacement program. In addition, security features such as Firewall and VPN are not available in the current router hardware. To meet DIR recommendations and increase security to agency resources, Regional office and laboratory network equipment needs to be replaced with new router equipment that includes these security features.

## **Computer Room**

TAHC's Data Center operations are not included, with the twenty-seven largest agencies, in the Texas Data Center project. Originally, TAHC's Computer Room supported a few small computers. Due to insufficient budget, TAHC did not perform needed upgrades as the computing environment grew. Implementation of proper operating methods for securing TAHC data resources requires additional funding and a variety of new equipment.

## **V. Impact of Federal Statutes/Regulations**

The USDA, through its *Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Uniform Methods and Rules*, and national program standards, requires state programs to include specific minimum elements for disease control and eradication. A state may enact more stringent regulations if needed to prevent or control diseases. All states are expected to collaboratively participate in cooperative disease control and eradication programs or face significant animal movement restrictions from USDA and other states. Movement restrictions would significantly reduce the marketability of Texas animals and increase the cost of market access.

TAHC and USDA-APHIS-VS cooperatively address a number of diseases, as detailed in the following federal regulations:

- Brucellosis (9 CFR, Parts 51 and 78)
- Tuberculosis (9 CFR, Parts 50 and 77)
- Pseudorabies (9 CFR, Parts 52 and 85)
- Fever Ticks (9 CFR, Part 72; 7 CFR, Part 2.80)
- Equine Infectious Anemia (9 CFR, Part 75)
- Johne's disease (9 CFR, Part 80)
- National Poultry Improvement Plan (9 CFR, Part 145 and 147)
- Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs):
  - Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (9 CFR, Parts 93, 94, 95, 96)
  - Scrapie in sheep and goats (9 CFR, Parts 54 and 79)
  - Chronic Wasting Disease in cervids (9 CFR, Part 55)

New national disease control programs, emergency management responsibilities, and trade agreements with foreign countries have had a significant impact on TAHC. Concurrent with federal cooperative funding reductions, these new or expanded programs continue to stretch TAHC's already stressed resources to their limits. TAHC is expected to continue to protect Texas' animal industries from incursions of disease and ectoparasites from other states and countries, and to be prepared to respond effectively to any accidental or intentional introduction of animal disease agents or animal pests.

**Tuberculosis:** After losing its accredited free TB status in 2002, TAHC worked to find any remaining tuberculosis infected cattle herds. To regain credibility with trading partners and to identify any remaining TB infection in the state, All dairies in the state were tested for TB in 2003-2005, and over 2,000 purebred or seed stock herds were also tested, using mostly federal funds to support this effort. Through these and other efforts, Texas was able to regain accredited free TB status in the fall of 2006.

Significant TB problems currently still exist in a number of other states. Because of these problems, TAHC imposed additional TB program testing and identification requirements on dairy cattle. Proper identification of dairy cattle in Texas is critical to successful disease tracing activities. A new infected dairy was detected in Texas in May of 2009. Although the dairy ultimately depopulated, thousands of animals were sold out of the herd in the years prior to detection, requiring testing of over 60 dairies to date. The number of cattle that would have had to test would have been much higher without the mandatory dairy identification program. No further infection was detected in Texas, but the source was not detected, and the risk of reintroduction of tuberculosis into Texas continues.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA/APHIS) issued a federal order on April 15, 2010, that modifies certain elements of the bovine tuberculosis (TB) eradication program. The Federal Order is intended as a two year interim measure until federal revised bovine tuberculosis regulations can be proposed for review and public comment, and final rules issued. In the interim, APHIS will not downgrade "free" status of a state except where there is a wildlife reservoir, and if that state animal health agency is meeting certain other criteria. This order has allowed Texas to retain its free status that would have been lost by the disclosure of the newly infected dairy in 2009. The most important criteria however in the order is that a state must maintain an "adequate infrastructure" to respond to and contain bovine tuberculosis. For this reason it is imperative that TAHC and the Texas cattle remain vigilant in its surveillance and mitigation activities for Tb. Adequate funding must be maintained for Texas to keep its infrastructure intact and minimize the risk of further sanctions from USDA or other state animal health agencies.

**Brucellosis:** In February 2008, USDA granted Brucellosis Free Status to the State of Texas. This is a significant accomplishment that took many years of hard work and dedication by the cattle industry, countless hours by state and federal animal health staff and many millions of dollars in industry, state and federal funding. The national brucellosis program standards provide that states continue all the brucellosis program elements for at least two years after the state achieves free status. Historically those same programs have continued for at least five or more years in all other states.

The primary surveillance activities for brucellosis is testing required for change of ownership, often at the first point of concentration, which is usually a livestock market. The first-point testing program is the testing of adult "test eligible cattle" sold through a livestock market, and it is currently also the state of Texas's primary identification system for adult cattle in Texas. Historically, the Commission has provided a \$2.00 per head supplement to the markets for the hiring of a private veterinarian to have the animals tested. That supplement is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the USDA; however, federal funds have been significantly reduced in recent years. TAHC is currently amending test requirements to allow for cessation of market testing with prior notice (minimum 2 months), if state/federal funds are no longer adequate to support the process. It is anticipated that federal funds to support first point testing will continue for at least 3 more years, but will eventually be reduced significantly and/or stopped completely. At that point, Texas will most

likely rely on slaughter testing for its primary surveillance activities, unless producers bear the cost of the testing. The importance of proper identification will be more critical than ever at that point and time. TAHC will continue its brucellosis eradication activities then primarily in response to positive animals identified at slaughter. Due to the presence of swine brucellosis in Texas, which can infect cattle and cross react with the existing tests, it is anticipated that hundreds of cattle herds per year will be tested to rule out the presence of the bovine strain of brucellosis in Texas cattle, as a result of the misdiagnosis on slaughter blood from animals that cannot be retested for confirmation.

**Poultry diseases:** Poultry diseases continue to assume significant economic and health implications for the state poultry industries. Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT) is a continual animal health issue poultry in Texas due to the Texas poultry industry's trade agreements with certain foreign countries requiring Texas to comply with more stringent ILT certifications. Texas has experienced two outbreaks of Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI), one episode of Exotic Newcastle Disease (END), and one episode of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) during the last six years in the commercial industry. END and HPAI are foreign animal diseases and these disease outbreaks affected the marketability of poultry and poultry products for Texas and the entire US. Expansion of poultry disease surveillance requirements is anticipated due to the concern about H5N1 HPAI around the world. State resources will need to be maintained at minimum, or possibly enhanced to continue to protect this important industry.

**Cattle Fever Tick:** Cattle Fever Tick incursions into areas outside the Cattle Fever Tick Eradication Quarantine Area have resulted in extraordinary efforts to contain and eliminate the fever tick outbreaks. Fever tick infestations resulted in the formation of three Temporary Preventive Quarantine Areas in the formerly fever tick free areas of Starr County, Zapata County and the three county area of Dimmitt, Webb and Maverick Counties. These temporary preventive quarantine areas were imposed in an effort to contain the movement of fever ticks and enable eradication of the outbreaks. The temporary zones have placed significant economic hardships on the ranchers located within them, but are necessary to control the situation. The number of fever tick infested premises has been at the highest level since the 1970s. TAHC and the USDA Tick Force requested additional funding to cover the costs of the expanding fever tick problem. USDA received an additional \$5.23 million in March 2008 to aid in addressing the outbreak. The 81<sup>st</sup> Legislature also appropriated TAHC funds to hire temporary employees and buy products for control. It is essential that these funds be provided again so that TAHC can continue at minimum to supplement the USDA response efforts in Texas.

The Commission has also responded to several disease issues of concern by various affected industry groups which have created several Texas control programs.

**Chronic Wasting Disease:** Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) affecting elk and deer (cervids) as well as moose, in North America. This degenerative neurological illness has affected both farmed and wild cervids in the US, thus impacting the hunting and wildlife industries as well as domestic and international markets for farmed cervids and cervid products. USDA proposed some amendments to the Code of Federal Regulation in 2006 for the purpose redefining interstate movement of animals within this program. USDA proposed amendments to their final rule which would preempt state laws and rules regarding the entry of cervids, and potentially limit the Commission and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's (TPWD) ability to protect the animals within this state.

The Commission has historically worked with various associations such as Texas Deer Breeders, Texas Exotic Wildlife Association and the Texas Wildlife Association as well as TPWD, the Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (TVMDL) and USDA. This CWD group helped to develop a strategy for increasing elk participation in CWD surveillance. Draft legislation was developed through the group which was used as the template for filing. Legislation was filed and identified as House Bill (H.B.) 3330. Based on the passage of the legislation the task force met again on June 18, 2009, to discuss the creation of an elk CWD surveillance program. A program was created to require participation in a surveillance program or have a specific number

of elk tested in order to authorize a person transports elk in the state. TAHC and the Texas cervid industry must remain vigilant through effective surveillance initiatives to ensure CWD does not enter the state or establish itself and not be quickly detected.

The statewide CWD inventory program already underway, primarily for white tail deer, will possibly double the work load for the agency if a national program is developed, or if interstate movement rules are relaxed for white tail deer nationwide. Currently TAHC inventories approximately 1/3 of the deer herds permitted in the state by Texas Parks and Wildlife, but if deer owners wish to move their deer interstate at some future date, they must enroll in the TAHC system. The inventory process can be very labor intensive for TAHC staff in some situations, so an increase in requests for TAHC program status will be fiscally challenging to the agency.

**Trichomoniasis:** Bovine Trichomoniasis (aka trichomoniasis or trich) is a venereal disease of cattle caused by the protozoa *Tritrichomonas foetus* (*T. foetus*) which causes early abortions in cattle. Bulls are a source of the disease because they can spread infection from cow to cow during breeding. Because of the economic impact of the disease, all states west of Texas have developed trich programs already. Beginning in the summer of 2008 a working group of industry representatives gathered and discussed the need for a control program to protect the Texas cattle industry. The group then provided recommendations to the Commission on the components and implementation strategy for a Trichomoniasis Control Program which were ultimately accepted and passed as rules.

Interstate entry rules for out of state bulls entering Texas were enacted in April of 2009, and the in-state trich control program began on January 1, 2010. The primary focus of the program is that Texas breeding bulls offered for sale, lease, exchange or otherwise change possession for breeding within the state must be certified as “virgin” bulls or be tested negative. An industry led Trichomoniasis Working Group Meeting met again on May 12, 2010, to evaluate the recently implemented Trichomoniasis Program and make recommendations. The group was very supportive of the program to date, but considered a number of enhancements to the program that may result in future rule changes. It is anticipated that the agency fiscal requirements for support of this unfunded new program will expand over time, and be significant.

**Feral Swine:** The Commission has operated a feral swine holding facility program since 1993. Over 100 feral swine facilities are currently in existence and are inspected regularly by TAHC field staff. During the 80<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session in 2007, there was legislation (HB 2543) which clarified the Commission’s existing authority to regulate the movement of animals to include movement of feral swine for disease-control purposes. The Commission developed new rules for feral swine through a stakeholder group, comprised of the various organizations and people involved in the swine industry, was convened to discuss issues for developing new feral swine rules. TAHC will continue to work closely with the Texas swine industry as well as hunters and trappers to ensure that feral swine rules are effective and efficient.

**Equine Piroplasmosis (Piro):** Equine Piroplasmosis or “piro” is considered foreign to the United States and is caused by the protozoa *Babesia* (*Theileria*) *equi* and *Babesia* *caballi*. The disease, which affects horses, but not people, has recently been detected in Texas and several other states. Piro is a tick-borne protozoal infection of horses that can also be spread by any transfer of blood, including unsafe animal husbandry practices, such as sharing needles between horses. At least two species of tick have also proven capable of transmitting the blood parasite in Texas. These species of tick are endemic to South Texas and several other southern states, but are not believed to be the major spread of the disease between horses currently, except in some limited situations. As a result of this detection, numerous states are now requiring Texas horses to be tested prior to entry, and TAHC is actively investigating new cases and quarantining positive premises.. There are four “at risk” populations of horses currently under investigation, 1) racing quarter horses, 2) retired racing quarter horses now used for breeding purposes, 3) international import horses that entered legally prior to 2006(or entered illegally at any time), and 4) working quarter horses originating from a single large ranch in south Texas. The risk from the first three populations above is not considered unique to Texas, but is a national concern. Because there are currently only limited federal guidelines (and no federal funds) for

response to this new disease, it is anticipated that this emerging disease situation that will increase in importance once effective surveillance systems are developed. TAHC is working closely with the Texas horse industry, the Texas Racing Commission, neighboring state animal health agencies and USDA to determine the scope of the outbreak. Without federal funds to support control of this disease in Texas, it is anticipated that this newly detected disease will have a long term fiscal impact on the TAHC and the Texas horse industry. It has already TAHC's current biennium budget.

## ***VI. Other Legal Issues***

A primary legislative need that the Commission anticipates will be to ensure that most agency provisions are applicable to all agricultural animals in the Commission's enabling chapter. Chapter 161 of the Texas Agriculture Code utilizes at different times the terms livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, and exotic fowl, which are all included in the term "animal". The application of these terms are inconsistent however in some sections, creating unintended gaps in TAHC authority to handles diseases of all species in the same manner, especially as related to poultry. The Commission's statutory authority for the Texas Cattle Fever Eradication program also needs to be broadened as a result of the development of new treatment options other than "dipping". Authority to require treatment or management of wildlife located in defined zones "near" tick infested premises is also desired.

Other current issues of national importance that may require re-evaluation of the TAHC legal authority in the near future include 1) development of animal care/husbandry standards (recently occurred in numerous other states), 2) animal identification program authority or protection in response to new federal requirements, and 3) aquaculture authority in regard to Homeland Security related "on-farm" food safety concerns and/or new USDA fish disease eradication programs(viral hemorrhagic septicemia for example) .

## ***VII. Self-Evaluation and Opportunities for Improvement***

As documented elsewhere in this strategic plan, Texas achieved Brucellosis Free Status in February of 2008, but surveillance for this disease will continue for many years to come. TAHC as an agency is no longer primarily focused on brucellosis activities however. The agency is more diverse than ever. With USDA/APHIS continuing to decrease state funding, and also re-evaluating its role in even supporting traditional eradication activities after 2015, it is more critical than ever that TAHC maintain a strong infrastructure to protect and respond on behalf of the Texas livestock and poultry industries. Traditional disease programs, foreign animal disease response, natural and man-made disaster response for animals, and a number of new or emerging disease programs will continue to stretch TAHC resources and staff to the limits.

### ***A. Staffing and Resource Needs***

Many of the animal disease control programs entrusted to TAHC are cooperative disease control programs with USDA. Traditionally, TAHC and USDA have jointly conducted these programs with a combination of state and federal staff. In recent years, USDA has experienced significant budget and staff reductions. USDA is currently undergoing an internal strategic planning process (Vision 2015) which appears to be re-evaluating its support of state level eradication programs at all. Early indications are that USDA will continue to reduce funding and push back disease program management to the state level, with its primary role to simply evaluate the effectiveness of state funded, staffed and managed (infrastructure) programs. Currently USDA funds supplements TAHC disease management efforts by approximately 35%. Some of these funds directly support TAHC employee salaries. If the USDA support is cut as anticipate, TAHC will need to find other resources to support the necessary staffing requirements, or ultimately cut services, or decrease its effectiveness to respond. This dependence on federal funding for daily activities is the single largest threat to TAHC continuing its history of effective service. TAHC must plan strategically to disengage from dependence on federal funds to

support state employees. Further, TAHC anticipates that there will be expanded demands for additional disease surveillance and certification processes from trading partners who buy Texas animals and products. Thus, additional reduction in agency staffing is not conducive to the agency fulfilling its mission as currently performed.

Additionally, the state faces the daily threat of intentional introduction of a disease or agent. The large number of animals in the state, a long and active coastline, and the proximity to a foreign country with a porous border make Texas livestock and poultry an exceptionally vulnerable target. Natural and disease related disasters will occur.

Adequate state funding is critical for TAHC to effectively perform the myriad animal health programs it is currently charged with. A number of future opportunities for TAHC are as follows:

### ***Homeland Security and Emergency Management***

TAHC staff will continue to develop and to strengthen working relationships with local government entities, Councils of Government, and livestock industries in regard to homeland security and emergency management activities. As the lead state agency for animal-in-disaster issues, both the Department of Homeland Security and the Governor's Division of Emergency Management expect TAHC to work closely with its local, state, federal and industry partners to develop biosecurity protocols, complete vulnerability assessments, and refine animal disaster prevention and response plans.

### ***Animal Disease Surveillance and Identification and Management of Emerging Diseases***

Based upon recent USDA requirements, there will be an obligation to develop and implement a comprehensive Texas animal disease surveillance system that will replace the current system. The surveillance system is designed to enable monitoring for many different diseases and compiling data to enable strategic planning for prevention, management, control or elimination of animal diseases. The system should be an early warning system for foreign and emerging diseases, as well as a diagnostic tool to identify reoccurrence of traditional diseases.

### ***Management of Diseases in Wild and Free-ranging Animals***

Many of the regulatory livestock diseases have wild or feral animals as biological hosts. Examples include Brucellosis (bison and elk), Bovine Tuberculosis (White-Tail Deer), Swine Brucellosis and Pseudorabies (feral swine), Fever Ticks (White-Tail Deer, Elk, Nilgai), Avian Influenza (Migratory Waterfowl).

TAHC has authority to address diseases in livestock, exotic livestock, poultry and exotic fowl regardless of the species of animal in which the disease is found. If the agency is to effectively address diseases that affect both wild and domestic animals, it must forge effective cooperative relationships with other state agencies, particularly the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

### ***Inspection Fees and Fee Revenue***

During the 78<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, House Bill 3442 was passed to provide authority to TAHC to "charge a fee for inspections conducted by the agency." In the 79<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, House Bill 1361 was passed to assist the implementation of the National Animal Identification System (now known as animal disease traceability) in Texas and to authorize TAHC to develop a rule to collect a premises registration fee; in the same session, House Bill 1363 was passed to allow the Commission, by rule, to determine the fee for certificates of veterinary inspection. The Commission has enacted rules related to certificates of veterinary inspection but, because of the resistance to the animal disease traceability system, both by members of the legislature and by industry members, the agency does not have rules related to Texas' participation in an animal disease traceability system.

## **B. Animal Disease Control and Eradication Programs**

TAHC is engaged in many animal health programs beyond surveillance, control, and eradication of traditional cattle diseases such as:

- Brucellosis,
- Tuberculosis,
- Johne's Disease
- Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE)
- Bovine Trichomoniasis(effective January 2010)

TAHC is additionally charged to continue many other surveillance, control, and eradication programs, including but not limited to:

- Avian Diseases (e.g., Avian Influenza (AI), Exotic Newcastle Disease (END), Pullorum-Typhoid (PT), Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT)) and Programs (e.g. the Fowl Registration Program and the Live Bird Marketing System (LBMS))
- Swine Diseases (e.g., Brucellosis, Aujeszky's Disease (Pseudorabies), Classical Swine Fever (CSF)) and Programs (e.g. the Waste Food Feeder Permit Program and the Feral Swine Holding Facility Permit Program)
- Equine Diseases (e.g., Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA), Vesicular Stomatitis (VS), Equine Viral Arteritis (EVA), Equine Piroplasmiasis, Equine Herpes Virus, Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM)and West Nile Virus (WNV))
- Sheep and Goat Diseases (e.g., Scrapie, Brucellosis, and Tuberculosis, scabies)
- Exotic Livestock Diseases (e.g., Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), Malignant Catarrhal Fever (MCF), Brucellosis, and Tuberculosis)
- Texas Fever Ticks
- Anthrax
- Animal Disease Surveillance and Reporting of Emerging Diseases and Zoonotic Diseases
- Emergency Management (e.g., Animal Disease Preparedness/Response, Natural Disaster Preparedness and Response, and Agroterrorism defense)
- Laboratory, Epidemiology, and Diagnostics
- Animal disease traceability

Although the agency performs a myriad of animal disease programs, initiatives, and projects that far exceed those detailed in this document, the current priorities of the agency are: (1) to conduct tuberculosis and brucellosis surveillance at a high level to assure complete eradication of these diseases and conform to national program standards; (2) to eliminate fever tick outbreaks and protect against re-establishment of fever ticks; (3) to prevent and prepare contingency plans for avian influenza and other significant poultry diseases, (4) respond to emerging disease situations such as equine piroplasmiasis and contagious equine metritis, (5) continue collaboration with industry on new program needs such as trich and animal disease traceability, and (6) to adequately support the agency's growing emergency management and Homeland Security protection functions.

## **C. Regionalization**

Regionalization issues will continue to redefine both suppliers and markets. "Disease not known to exist in this region" and "Disease known not to exist in this region" are two vastly different and important marketing statements. Today's livestock marketing requires a global perspective and requires statistically significant active surveillance thus allowing one to say that disease is known not to exist in this region. The World Trade Organization and NAFTA signatory countries, under the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, are committed to recognizing disease-free or low disease incidence areas by

adapting sanitary requirements to the health conditions from which a live animal or product originates. This is the basis for regionalization of disease risks in order to minimize disruption caused by unexpected disease outbreaks. States and countries may be divided into “regions” that are evaluated for the existence or non-existence of disease. The basic infrastructure of practicing veterinarians and animal regulatory agencies that conduct surveillance to prevent, diagnose, control, and eradicate diseases and exotic pests must be supported by a competent and efficient individual animal identification system in order to support credible animal health status claims.

TAHC, through its trained and experienced workforce, currently provides the necessary infrastructure that provides assurances needed for both domestic and international trade. Further, TAHC works closely with neighboring state animal health agencies, and Mexican officials to ensure adequate collaboration and communication. As diseases are eradicated and within the limitation of current resources, TAHC will continue to address trade issues by utilizing surveillance to document that a disease is known NOT to exist in our region; however, enhancement of our animal identification and traceability system will need to occur to meet growing marketplace and international demands for process verification and disease traceability assurance.

#### **D. Interagency Partnerships**

TAHC has partnered with other state and federal agencies to address the needs of Texas producers and emergency management issues. Additional partnerships will be essential to provide efficient government service.

Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) TAHC and TDA are both committed to enhancing marketability and mobility of Texas livestock and the agencies cooperate on matters of joint interest concerning animal health, animal production, and marketing of Texas livestock. The two agencies agree to coordinate available resources and expertise to make international movement of healthy livestock easier.

Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) (Zoonosis Control Division and Meat Safety Assurance Division) TAHC and the Zoonosis Control Division and the Meat Safety Assurance Division of the DSHS are encouraging interagency interaction, cooperation, collaboration on common interests and challenges and exchange of information related to zoonotic diseases and animal disease issues of mutual interest. The two agencies continue to seek ways to promote a greater sense of unity, mutual support, and purpose.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) TAHC and TPWD share similar interests regarding animal health in Texas, specifically working on integrated strategies to manage the threats posed by fever ticks, CWD, brucellosis and TB to the Texas wildlife, feral swine and the captive deer and elk industries. The two agencies share information and are working to develop improved interaction where the two agencies have complementary missions. TAHC provides training to TPWD cadets on diseases and agency regulations and TPWD has provided training to TAHC Compliance staff on effective investigative techniques. The two agencies have developed and continue to advance a shared CWD database, as directed by SB 1586.

Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (TVMDL) TAHC utilizes TVMDL services to minimize duplication, assure cost effectiveness, and ensure that all possible testing is performed in Texas. TVMDL is a member of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network, and as such, provides diagnostic services to TAHC and USDA in response to a foreign or emerging animal disease outbreak. The two agencies also work cooperatively to develop enhanced diagnostic infrastructure as well as to control and eradicate pullorum disease and fowl typhoid and other diseases in poultry and to implement other provisions of NPIP.

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) During the 78<sup>th</sup> Regular Legislative Session, House Bill 3061 was passed and signed by the Governor which provides that TCEQ may not adopt a rule related to the disposal of livestock unless the rule is developed in cooperation with and approved by the Texas Animal Health Commission. In addition, TCEQ is a key participant in animal health emergency planning and response activities.

Texas Department of Public Safety (TDPS) TAHC has an MOU with TDPS. TAHC has provided training documents for TDPS officers about TAHC regulations, and how to review health papers and permits required for entry of livestock into the state. TAHC conducts follow-up investigations whenever possible entry violations are reported by TDPS officers. TAHC notifies TDPS, when appropriate, of the location of Commission roadblocks or when special or night operations are conducted.

Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) TAHC is a member of the State Emergency Management Council, the State Emergency Response Team (SERT), and the DPS Disaster District Committees (DDCs) located throughout the State. As such, agency personnel work closely with GDEM to prepare for and respond to local government and state-level emergencies and disasters involving animals. As part of the emergency response system, TAHC will work with the Texas Homeland Security Council to address issues identified by them.

Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (TSBVME) While TAHC depends on the veterinary practitioner to recognize or diagnose regulatory diseases and report them to TAHC, the TSBVME ensures that only licensed veterinarians perform veterinary services, and that they perform them in accordance with appropriate standards.

Texas A&M University System (TAMU) TAHC staff provides training for students of the College of Veterinary Medicine. Staff of the College of Veterinary Medicine provides consultation concerning the efficacy of veterinary biologics. The Office of the Texas State Chemist works to protect Texas consumers and to help maintain an equitable marketplace for feed and fertilizer manufacturers. The National Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense (FAZD) and the Institute for Counter-measures Against Bioterrorism (ICAB) leverage TAMU resources to partner with TAHC and other state and federal partners to provide educational, research initiatives, and database/modeling systems to supplement and support existing emergency response plans. The TAHC will work with the Texas A & M University's College of Veterinary Medicine (TAMU-CVM) to establish a Mobile Veterinary Assistance Team (MVAT) to respond to animal related disasters. TAHC has partnered with TAMU and Texas Veterinary Medical Association (TVMA) on a joint application for federal funding for homeland security issues to enhance the capability of the State of Texas to rapidly respond to terrorist incidents affecting the agriculture industry.

Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) In prior years, TAHC was designated as the lead agency for the agricultural assessment required for the state to be eligible for federal homeland security funding related to agriculture. TAHC worked with the College of Veterinary Medicine, TDA, DSHS, TVMDL, and USDA to complete the agriculture assessment. In 2006, the oversight of homeland security funding from the federal government to the state has moved from TEEX to GDEM.

Texas Agrilife Extension Service (TAES) The TAES educates Texans in the areas of agriculture, environmental stewardship, youth and adult life skills, human capital and leadership, and community economic development. TAHC draws on and benefits greatly from the educational effort of the Extension Service in the area of animal health and emergency response outreach. TAHC is also an available resource for extension agents to use in conducting their programs.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)-Veterinary Services (VS) TAHC works hand in hand with USDA-APHIS-VS. The missions of each are very closely related, with primary responsibility to safeguard resources from exotic invasive pests and diseases and to monitor and manage pests and diseases existing within our borders. Through cooperative agreements (federal funding), the federal agency is able to enhance its federal program accomplishments while its funding supplements the dollars allocated to TAHC through state funding.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)-Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) TAHC is dependent upon and works closely with USDA-FSIS to monitor for disease via the inspection of carcasses and

the collection of samples at slaughter plants for disease testing. This surveillance program becomes even more important in the post eradication surveillance phase for diseases such as bovine brucellosis, tuberculosis and TSE's.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) NRCS partners with TAHC in a variety of response and recovery issues during natural and disease related disasters to protect soil, water, and other resources as necessary. NRCS and TAHC have worked cooperatively in recent disasters to support Texas livestock and poultry producers with carcass disposal and damage assessment issues. NRCS may also have a role in the fever tick eradication program by supporting brush control, improved grazing management and construction of game proof fencing.

### ***VIII. Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBS)***

The agency prepares and distributes information on procurement procedures in a manner that encourages participation in agency contracts by all businesses. The agency has a toll free telephone number available for use by all interested vendors to inquire about upcoming bids and forum opportunities. The agency uses the Texas Procurement and Support Services (TPASS) Centralized Master Bidders List/Historically Underutilized Business (CMBL/HUB) directory as its primary source for notification of procurement-related activities and opportunities. The agency posts bid information on the Electronic State Business Daily (ESBD), State Procurement Section of the Texas Marketplace, for procurement opportunities expected to cost \$25,000 or more.

All specifications for bids are written to ensure the commodity or service is well defined and complies with industry standards and competitive bid requirements. Delivery schedules are verified to ensure they are reasonable and consistent with the agency's needs. Specifications are reviewed to ensure the requirements, terms, and conditions are clearly stated, reflect the agency's actual requirements, and do not impose unreasonable or unnecessary contract requirements. In addition, TAHC routinely selects HUB vendors when available as suppliers when ordering through Department of Information Resources (DIR) pre-negotiated contracts.

TAHC has a HUB policy fully consistent with, and in support of, the mission, goals, and objectives established for Texas HUBs by TPASS for all bid solicitations as well as all competitive Requests for Proposals (RFP), Requests for Offers (RFO), and Requests for Qualifications (RFQ). HUB Sub-contracting Plans (HSPs) are required for all competitive solicitations of \$100,000 or more and are strongly encouraged, but not required, for solicitations less than \$100,000.

The agency is committed to encouraging and promoting HUB participation through actively soliciting HUBs in future competitive solicitations and through continuing its participation in state-wide outreach activities. Solicitation instruments summarize TPASS's HUB goals and guides potential vendors to TPASS so that those eligible for HUB status may complete the TPASS application process and become certified as a HUB. The agency's RFP and contract models include sections that spotlight the importance of HUB participation by qualified vendors in all competitive procurement processes. Each formal bid invitation includes information declaring the agency's good faith effort to reach established HUB goals.

Historically, TAHC has not expended funds in heavy construction or building construction as the mission of the agency does not lend itself to expenditures for goods or services in these categories. The majority of TAHC HUB awards are for professional services, commodities, and for other services. TAHC has adjusted its contracting goals for the HUB groups that were not underutilized. The agency strives to meet the overall or "unadjusted" goals under the disparity study.

The agency has established a Mentor-Protégé Program, as required by Senate Bill 178, 76<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, to provide contractors with a referenced list of certified HUBs for subcontracting. The Mentor-Protégé Program legislation requires TPASS to design a program to foster long-term relationships between prime contractors and HUBs and to increase the ability of HUBs to contract with the state or to receive subcontracts under a state contract. TAHC's program is also designed to help with the identification of qualified and certified HUB contractors and subcontractors in their geographic region. This program matches HUB subcontractors with non-HUB prime contractors in an effort to establish Mentor-Protégé relationships. .

## **Program on Subcontracting**

Each written bid invitation includes documentation which explains the TAHC Historically Underutilized Business outreach and Good Faith Effort Program (GFEP).

All solicitations valued at \$100,000 or more, whether via bids, RFPs, RFOs, or RFQs, require a HUB Subcontracting Plan (HSP) by all responding vendors. Additionally, TAHC RFP, RFQ, and RFO instruments include instructions for responding vendors to access TPASS's Centralized Master Bidders List (CMBL) so they may actively contact qualified HUB vendors who might provide subcontracting for the primary vendor based on relevant NIGP Class and Item commodity codes. Failure of a responding vendor to include a HSP when one is required is deemed by TAHC as a material failure to comply with the advertised specifications and disqualifies that responding vendor from receiving an award from the solicitation. Responses may also be rejected if the TAHC evaluation team determines that the HSP was not developed in good faith. However, the success or failure of the prime contractor to subcontract with HUBs in any specific quantity is not indicative of whether the contractor made a good faith effort.

The documentation explains specific goals, and declares that prime contractors are required to assist in the effort to reach or exceed these goals. If the prime contractor plans to use a subcontractor in conjunction with the contract, the agency requires the prime contractor to provide a list of HUB subcontractors who will be used and a completed HUB checklist which delineates specific steps the prime contractor took to make a good faith effort.

At the time of award, if the prime contractor has declared subcontracting will be done with HUBs, the agency's HUB Coordinator works directly with the Prime Contractor to establish procedures to ensure compliance with HUB reporting requirements.

## **Specific Programs**

- **Mentor-Protégé Program:** matches HUBs and non-HUB contractors for potential subcontracting opportunities. This program also aids TAHC staff in identifying HUBs with whom to do business.
- **Contractor and Vendor Outreach:** TAHC Purchasing staff members participate in forums sponsored by business organizations, trade associations, special interest groups, and state agencies, such as the Economic Opportunity Forums sponsored by TPASS, to educate minority and woman-owned businesses about how they can earn more business with the State of Texas.
- **Marketing Efforts:** Bid advertisements are placed in minority and woman-owned newspapers from time to time to reach prospective vendors. These ads publicize the goods and services most frequently purchased by the agency and provide vendors with agency contact information.

# Agency Goals, Objectives, Outcome Measures, Strategies, and Other Measures

## Goal 01 – Protect/Enhance Texas Animal Health

To protect and enhance the health of Texas animal populations, facilitating productivity and marketability while sustaining reduced human health risks.

### Objective 01-01

To minimize the impact of disease on Texas animal populations by maintaining or reducing known levels of diseases; and to enhance preparedness for emergency response by increasing staff activities devoted to emergency preparedness annually.

### Outcome Measures

01-01.01	OC	Percent change in the number of fever tick infested premises from the 2007 level
01-01.02	OC	Percent change in known prevalence of bovine tuberculosis from the 1994 level
01-01.03	OC	Percent change in known prevalence of swine brucellosis and pseudorabies from the 1994 level
01-01.04	OC	Percent change in known prevalence of equine infectious anemia from the 1994 level
01-01.05	OC	Percent change in the number of surveillance and enforcement activities
01-01.06	OC	Percent change in diseases and pests of animal health significance detected
01-01.07	OC	Percentage increase in Animal-related emergency management activities

### Strategy 01-01-01 – Field Operations

Monitor, control and/or eradicate diseases and infestations through statewide field based animal health management and assurance programs.

#### Output Measures

01-01-01.01	OP	Number of livestock shipments inspected
01-01-01.02	OP	Number of surveillance inspections conducted
01-01-01.03	OP	Number of cases identified for evaluation and tracing to herds or flocks of origin
01-01-01.04	OP	Number of cases identified for determination of presence or absence of disease
01-01-01.05	OP	Number of herd management documents developed
01-01-01.06	OP	Number of animal movement records processed
01-01-01.07	OP	Emergency management response hours

01-01-01.08	OP	Number of foreign animal disease contacts and consultations
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#### Efficiency Measures

01-01-01.01	EF	Average number of days from date of disclosure of suspicious case to location of herd or flock of origin
01-01-01.02	EF	Average number of days from identification of herd or flock to diagnosis

#### Explanatory Measure

01-01-01.01	EX	Number of restricted movement permits issued
01-01-01.02	EX	Percent of time in emergency preparedness training and activities
01-01-01.03	EX	Emergency management preparation hours

### Strategy 01-01-02 – Diagnostic/Epidemiological Support

Provide epidemiological expertise, serological testing, microbiological confirmation, and parasite identification services for diseases and parasitism's of regulatory importance to the animal agriculture industries in Texas.

#### Output Measures

01-01-02.01	OP	Number of specimens processed through the State/Federal Cooperative Laboratory System
01-01-02.02	OP	Number of epidemiological investigation reviews completed
01-01-02.03	OP	Number of epidemiological consultations

#### Efficiency Measure

01-01-02.01	EF	Average time to conduct an epidemiological consultation
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### Strategy 01-01-03 – Promote Compliance

Promote voluntary compliance with legal requirements by providing education or information, and to resolve violations through effective use of legal enforcement and compliance activities.

#### Output Measures

01-01-03.01	OP	Number of compliance actions completed
01-01-03.02	OP	Number of compliance investigations conducted
01-01-03.03	OP	Number of hours expended in providing public information activities

#### Efficiency Measure

01-01-03.01	EF	Average number of days to complete a compliance action
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**Goal 02 – Historically Underutilized Businesses**

The agency will continue to establish and carry out policies governing purchasing and contracting that foster meaningful and substantive inclusion of Historically Underutilized Businesses.

**Objective 02-01**

To include HUBs in the following percentages of the total value of contracts including subcontracts awarded annually by the agency in purchasing and contracting.

Procurement Category	HUB Goal
Special Trade	10%
Professional Services	95%
Other Services	15%
Commodity Purchasing	10%

**Outcome Measure**

02-01.01	OC	Percentage of total dollar value of purchasing, contracts, and subcontracts awarded to HUBs
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**Strategy 02-01-01 – Historically Underutilized Businesses**

Continue to develop and implement plans to increase the use of HUBs through purchasing contracts and subcontracts

**Output Measures**

02-01-01.01	OP	Number of purchase orders issued directly to HUB vendors
02-01-01.02	OP	Number of contracts with HUB subcontracting
02-01-01.03	OP	Number of HUB forums attended
02-01-01.04	OP	Number of internal agency HUB training sessions conducted

**Explanatory Measures**

02-01-01.01	EX	Total agency dollars spent in HUB Procurement Categories
02-01-01.02	EX	Number of HUB Subcontracting dollars

# Technology Resource Planning

## **Part 1: Technology Assessment Summary**

The Information Technology department's goal is to provide equipment, training, software, services, and support to TAHC employees who are responsible for upholding the six key functions of the agency. To that end, the IR Department provides all employees with remote access to TAHC information resources that are operating system agnostic and web-based. Agency databases are being developed that are web accessible and do not require additional client software on agency computers. Equipment assigned to field staff is being designed to upload data in real-time to USDA and TAHC databases so that analysis and reporting on animal diseases and natural occurring disasters can be performed. Network security is being tightened in relation to the wider availability of agency resources and information. Social media sites will be used to communicate agency and regulatory news to the public at large.

### **Statewide Technology Goal 1**

Strengthen and Expand the Use of Enterprise Services and Infrastructure

#### 1.1 Enhance Capabilities of the Shared Infrastructure

- Data Center Infrastructure
- Communications Technology Infrastructure
- Statewide Portal Infrastructure

#### 1.2 Leverage Shared Applications

- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)
- Email Messaging

#### 1.3 Leverage the State's Purchasing Power

- Product and Services Portfolio Expansion

### **Strengthen capabilities in accordance with Statewide Technology Goal 1**

TAHC uses TEX-AN to provide all network and telecommunication services to all agency offices and laboratories. In the future, the agency will migrate to VOIP phone service in every office through TEX-AN contracts. The TAHC uses TexasOnline to sell Certificates of Veterinary Inspection - Large Animals and Equine Certificates of Veterinary Inspection, or Equine Interstate Movement Passports. The agency does not have many fee-based programs so expanding use of TexasOnline is not possible at this time.

### **Strengthen capabilities through initiatives that leverage enterprise infrastructure**

TAHC continues to use DIR ICT Cooperative Contracts to purchase IT items for the agency. Internally, TAHC will continue to employ Citrix to allow multiple users to share applications and data.

## **Statewide Technology Goal 2**

Secure and Safeguard Technology Assets and Information

### 2.1 Align the State's Approach to Enterprise Security with other State and National Strategies

- State Enterprise Security Plan
- Vulnerability to Cyber Attacks
- Response and Recovery Capabilities

### 2.2 Integrate Identity Management, Credentialing, and Access Privileges

- Identity Management Services

## **Progress in implementing strategies to align with the *State Enterprise Security Plan***

TAHC conducts annual Controlled Penetration Tests through DIR. It has been beneficial and provides awareness of security risks. TAHC is exploring DIR provision of continuous network security monitoring and alerting to this agency. This DIR service will be beneficial in the face of budget reductions and increased staffing needs that may exceed the capabilities of this agency.

## **Identity Management Strategies in Place**

Identity management is handled by a centralized directory service that authenticates and authorizes users for email, file services, applications, remote access, and more. Redundancy is in place so there is never disruption in service.

## **Statewide Technology Goal 3**

Serve Citizens Anytime, Anywhere

### 3.1 Expand and Enhance Access to Agency Services

- Multi-Channel Access
- Rural Broadband Expansion

### 3.2 Facilitate Open and Transparent Government

- Best Practices for Information Assets

## **Expansion of access to services and promotion of citizen engagement through online services**

While TAHC still communicates with Texas citizens and veterinarian practitioners through conferences, mail, and telephone, TAHC has started efforts to expand into social media sites Twitter and Facebook. By the end of FY 2010, TAHC will have a presence on those sites in order to communicate agency and state regulation news to the public.

## **Facilitation of access to agency information and public data**

Social media sites will be launched by TAHC. Audio recordings of commissioner meetings are now available on the TAHC public website. More content is being developed to publish on the agency public website around animal health and emergency response initiatives.

## **Statewide Technology Goal 4**

Pursue Excellence and Foster Innovation across the Enterprise

### 4.1 Link Technology Solutions to Workplace Innovations

- Workplace Productivity and Collaboration

### 4.2 Pursue Leading-Edge Strategies for Application Deployment

- Cloud Computing
- Specifications, Toolkits, and the Application Marketplace
- Legacy Systems Modernization

### 4.3 Optimize Information Asset Management

- Best Practices for Managing Digital Information

### 4.4 Promote the Use and Sharing of Information

- Health Information Exchange
- Statewide Communications Interoperability
- Justice Information System Integration
- Enterprise Geospatial Services

## **Enhancement of workplace productivity and use of collaboration tools**

WebEx is being used more often to provide training to field employees and provide meetings that include participants from many agencies. GIS mapping capabilities are being expanded to allow the sharing of maps as well as remote access to develop maps. A digital asset management system is being purchased that will allow the sharing of media and documents to a wide audience and will be web accessible. A Laboratory Information Management System is being investigated for all TAHC labs so that all lab data is centrally stored and accessible by TAHC employees and other state/federal partners.

## **Efficiency of application development and deployment**

New internally developed applications are now developed in PHP and MySQL so that only a web browser is required to use agency databases. Legacy systems are being migrated to open source software and will be web accessible too. Cloud Computing will be used to create a digital asset media site that all employees can access regardless of their location. Legacy network systems will be updated in FY2010 to provide faster and more secure access to internet resources.

## Enhancement of information asset management practices

Policies and rules are being developed before TAHC deploys sites on Facebook and Twitter. The policy for public website postings is being reviewed and will be updated. An information retention schedule will be created.

## Practices that enhance information sharing with agency business partners

USDA is a key partner in the sharing of data regarding animal health, disease tracking, and animal traceability. Information is shared between the agencies through databases and reports. TAHC is creating a GIS web-based repository for animal health-related and emergency response maps that can be accessed by other state agencies and federal agencies.

## Part 2: Technology Initiative Alignment

The table below depicts the format and mapping of the TAHC's current and planned technology initiatives to the agency's business objectives.

TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE	RELATED AGENCY OBJECTIVE/(S)	RELATED SSP STRATEGY/(IES)	CURRENT OR PLANNED	ANTICIPATED BENEFIT(S)	INNOVATION, BEST PRACTICE, BENCHMARKING
Migrate to VOIP phone service in every office through TEX-AN contracts.	All objectives	1a	Planned	Reduction in telecommunication costs.	
Create agency social media sites Twitter and Facebook	All objectives	3a, 3b	Planned	Expand communication channels to the public.	
GIS mapping repository and service	All objectives	4a	Planned	Perform key functions of agency regardless of location.	
Digital Asset Management system	All objectives	4a	Planned	Accessibility over the internet; platform independent.	
Laboratory Information Management System	All objectives	4a	Planned	Meet federal security requirements for shared data and store all laboratory data in a central location.	
Rewrite Permit Tracker application	All objectives	4b	Current	Make the legacy application and data web-based and accessible anywhere.	

## Appendix A - Description of Agency Planning Process

TAHC Commissioners are appointed to represent various stakeholders. All of these entities provide continual input on the agency's direction. The agency maintains on-going interaction with industry groups, producers, veterinarians, other government agencies, and other entities involved in animal health management activities. The Agency has enacted industry led working groups for input on 5 issues (piro, ticks, trich, brucellosis, import cattle inspections) so far in 2010, and a sixth focused on animal disease traceability will convene in the summer of 2010.

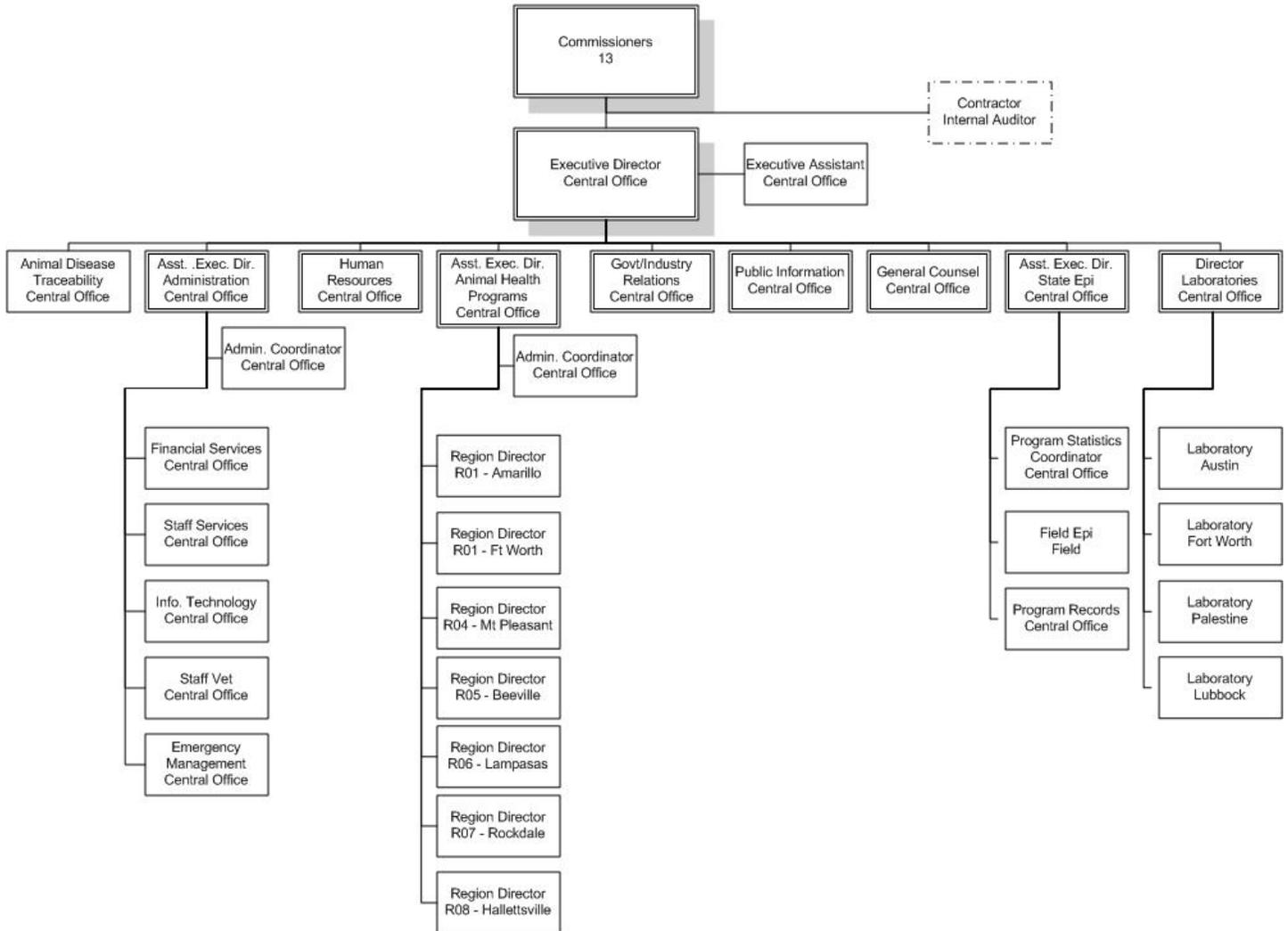
Each biennium, the strategic planning structure--goal, objective, strategies, and performance measures--is reviewed by agency management with input from TAHC Commissioners, agency staff, and industry groups. The Executive Advisory Team reviewed the agency's budget structure and suggested revising the budget structure to include a strategy for Emergency Management.

Upon reviewing the agency vision, mission, and philosophy statements, the Executive Advisory Team approved them without changes. The Team then thoroughly discussed and reviewed the agency direct strategies and prioritized the agency's work within those strategies for inclusion in this plan's External/Internal Assessment section. The agency's indirect strategies were reviewed within the context of planning for and anticipating resources required to adequately support the direct strategies.

The input collected from the variety of resources mentioned above was used to update and revise the previous Strategic Plan to develop the formal 2011 – 2015 Agency Strategic Plan. The input was invaluable in assessing where we have been, and where we are going. The process identified several emerging issues the agency will face in the future, which helped to identify ways that the agency can prepare for change and begin planning for the development of our Legislative Appropriations Request.

# Appendix B – Agency Organizational Chart

## Texas Animal Health Commission Fiscal Year 2010



## Appendix C – Five-Year Projections for Agency Outcome Measures

Outcome		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
01-01.01	Percent change in the number of fever tick infested premises from the 2007 level	-20.00%	-30.00%	-40.00%	-60.00%	-80.00%
01-01.02	Percent change in known prevalence of bovine tuberculosis from the 1994 level	-100.00	-100.00%	-100.00%	-100.00%	-100.00%
01-01.03	Percent change in known prevalence of swine brucellosis and pseudorabies from the 1994 level	-75.00%	-80.00%	-85.00%	-85.00%	-85.00%
01-01.04	Percent change in known prevalence of equine infectious anemia from the 1994 level	-89.21%	-89.47%	-89.74%	-91.79%	-92.11%
01-01.05	Percent change in the number of surveillance and enforcement activities	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%
01-01.06	Percent change in diseases and pests of animal health significance detected	-5.00%	-5.00%	-5.00%	-10.00%	-10.00%
01-01.07	Percentage increase in Animal-related emergency management activities	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%

## Appendix D – Agency Performance Measure Definitions

The agency utilizes five automated systems to collect data related to performance reporting. Rather than duplicating this information throughout the document, it is presented here once. The individual measures refer to the system(s) used to calculate performance.

Generic Database (**GDB**), developed and owned by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, tracks individual animals and herds tested in national disease eradication programs. The data is collected on a variety of USDA and TAHC forms completed by state and federal employees and private practice veterinarians. Both state and federal employees maintain and update the data.

The Profiler System, developed by the TAHC, tracks summary information on herds managed under regulatory control due to a disease program. The data is collected on a variety of USDA and TAHC forms completed by state and federal employees and private practice veterinarians. TAHC personnel maintain and update the data.

The Human Resources Information System (**HRIS**), developed and owned by the TAHC, tracks information relating to the work performed by the agency's field force. The data can be analyzed by area, employee, location, species, disease, activity, and project. The data is collected on a TAHC form 98-33 (Travel Continuation Form) completed by specified field personnel. TAHC personnel maintain and update the data.

The Permit Tracker System (**PTS**), developed and owned by the TAHC, tracks all interstate entry permits issued and verified by TAHC personnel. TAHC personnel maintain and update the data.

The Laboratory System (**Lab**), developed and owned by the TAHC, tracks all samples tested. The data is collected on a variety of USDA and TAHC forms completed by state and federal employees and private practice veterinarians. TAHC laboratory personnel maintain and update the data.

The Legal and Compliance Access database, developed by the TAHC, tracks violations of agency regulations and actions taken. The data is collected on a TAHC form 98-44 (Compliance Action Request) completed by TAHC and DPS staff. TAHC central office personnel maintain and update the data.

## Outcome Measures

### Outcome 01-01.01 Percent change in the number of fever tick infested premises from the 2007 level

**Short Definition:** The decrease in the 12 month cumulative number of know fever tick infested premises in the non-systematic area of Texas expressed as a percentage of the 12 month cumulative number of known infested premises for the base year of 2007 for the non-systematic area.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measure provides an indication of the extent to which the agency's efforts have identified and reduced the incidence of fever ticks in the non-systematic areas of Texas.

**Source/Collection of Data:** Cattle Fever Tick Eradication Program tick quarantine records—when a premise is determined to be infested with fever ticks it is quarantined for a specified period or until the premise is proven tick free.

**Method of Calculation:** A percentage is obtained by dividing the difference between the 12 month cumulative number of known infested premises for the current year (non-systematic) and the 12 month cumulative number of known tick infested premises for the base year by the 12 month cumulative number of known fever tick infested premises for the base year in the non-systematic area.

**Data Limitations:** The number of tick infested premises is influenced by a large variety of factors, and the number of infested premises can vary widely between years.

**Calculation Type:** Noncumulative

**Desired Performance:**

Higher than target (Because the target is a negative number, 'higher than target' would be a larger negative number.)

**New Measure:** Yes

**Key Measure:** No

### Outcome 01-01.02 Percent change in known prevalence of bovine tuberculosis from the 1994 level

**Short Definition:** The decrease in the 12 month accumulative number of known infected herds expressed as a percentage of the 12 month accumulative number of known infected herds for the base year of 1994.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measure provides an indication of the extent to which the agency's efforts have identified and reduced the incidence of bovine tuberculosis in Texas.

**Source/Collection of Data:** Generic Database (GDB)--when a bovine herd is determined to be infected with tuberculosis, a disease quarantine is issued. The disease quarantine is entered into the GDB status table by Area office personnel with a status code of 'Infect'. A herd remains on the Accumulative Herd list for twelve months after the last reactor is removed.

**Method of Calculation:** A percentage is obtained by dividing the difference between the 12 month accumulative number of known bovine tuberculosis infected herds for the current year and the 12 month accumulative number of known bovine tuberculosis infected herds for the base year by the 12 month accumulative number of known bovine tuberculosis infected herds for the base year.

**Data Limitations:** Due to the shared border with Mexico, which has a high incidence of TB, Texas may not be able to fully eradicate TB until Mexico reduces or eliminates this exposure. As programs succeed and we approach total disease eradication, the disclosure of even a small number of new cases can result in a significant variance from the target.

**Calculation Type:** Noncumulative

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target (Because the target is a negative number, 'higher than target' would be a larger negative number.)

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

**Outcome 01-01.03 Percent change in known prevalence of swine brucellosis and pseudorabies from the 1994 level**

**Short Definition:** The decrease in the 12 month accumulative number of known infected herds expressed as a percentage of the 12 month accumulative number of known infected herds for the base year of 1994.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measure provides an indication of the extent to which the agency's efforts have identified and reduced the incidence of swine brucellosis and pseudorabies in Texas.

**Source/Collection of Data:** Generic Database (GDB)--when a swine herd is determined to be infected with swine brucellosis or pseudorabies, a disease quarantine is issued. The disease quarantine is entered into the GDB status table by Area office personnel with a status code of 'Infect'. A herd remains on the Accumulative Herd list for twelve months after the last reactor is removed.

**Method of Calculation:** A percentage is obtained by dividing the difference between the 12 month accumulative number of known swine brucellosis and pseudorabies infected herds for the current year and the 12 month accumulative number of known swine brucellosis and pseudorabies infected herds for the base year by the 12 month accumulative number of known swine brucellosis and pseudorabies infected herds for the base year.

**Data Limitations:** Due to the feral (wild) swine population in Texas, which has a high incidence of disease, Texas will have to maintain a heightened level of vigilance to eradicate these diseases. As programs succeed and we approach total disease eradication, the disclosure of even a small number of new cases can result in a significant variance from the target.

**Calculation Type:** Noncumulative

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target (Because the target is a negative number, 'higher than target' would be a larger negative number.)

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

**Outcome 01-01.04 Percent change in known prevalence of equine infectious anemia from the 1994 level**

**Short Definition:** The decrease in the 12 month accumulative number of known infected herds expressed as a percentage of the 12 month accumulative number of known infected herds for the base year of 1994.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measure provides an indication of the extent to which the agency's efforts have identified and reduced the incidence of equine infectious anemia in Texas.

**Source/Collection of Data--Profiler--**when an animal is determined to be infected with equine infectious anemia, a disease quarantine is issued. The disease quarantine is entered into Profiler by Area office personnel with an action code of 'QH' (quarantined herd).

**Method of Calculation:** A percentage is obtained by dividing the difference between the 12 month accumulative number of known equine infectious anemia infected herds for the current year and the 12 month accumulative number of known equine infectious anemia infected herds for the base year by the 12 month accumulative number of known equine infectious anemia infected herds for the base year.

**Data Limitations:** As programs succeed and we approach total disease eradication, the disclosure of even a small number of new cases can result in a significant variance from the target.

**Calculation Type:** Noncumulative

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target (Because the target is a negative number, 'higher than target' would be a larger negative number.)

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

**Outcome 01-01.05 Percent change in the number of surveillance and enforcement activities**

**Short Definition:** The change in the 12 month accumulative number of surveillance and enforcement activities expressed as a percentage of the 12 month accumulative number of surveillance and enforcement activities in the previous year.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measure provides an indication of the extent to which the agency has continued the level of surveillance and prevention activities.

**Source/Collection of Data:** HRIS

**Method of Calculation:** A percentage is obtained by dividing the count of the number of instances of activity code 008 (Inspection performed) plus activity code 004 (parasite samples), plus activity code 077 (disease surveillance) for the current fiscal year by the same count for the previous fiscal year.

**Data Limitations:** Any disease outbreak would result in additional investigations for that disease, and/or a decrease in other disease inspections, and therefore create a variance from target.

**Calculation Type:** Noncumulative

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target, would indicate increased surveillance and improved chances of early detection of an outbreak.

**New Measure:** Yes

**Key Measure:** No

<b>Outcome 01-01.06</b>	<b>Percent change in diseases and pests of animal health significance detected</b>
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**Short Definition** The change in the 12 month accumulative number of diseases and pests of animal health significance detected expressed as a percentage of the 12 month accumulative number of diseases and pests of animal health significance in the previous year.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measure provides an indication of the extent to which the agency's surveillance efforts have identified diseases and pests (will increase the percent) and eradication efforts have been successful in eliminating diseases and pests (will decrease the percent).

**Source/Collections of Data:** Profiler

**Method of Calculation:** A percentage is obtained by dividing the count the number of records with an action code of HO (Form TAHC 97-04, "Order to Hold Animals on Premises" – ie. Formal movement restriction document presented to producer to allow diagnostic process to be completed while minimizing possible disease transmission from herd in question) and the number of records with an action code QH (quarantine) for the current fiscal year by the same count for the previous fiscal year.

**Data Limitations:** Any disease/pest outbreak would result in an increase in reportable diseases and pests and therefore a variance from target.

**Calculation Type:** Noncumulative

**Desired Performance:** Lower than target

**New Measure:** Yes

**Key Measure:** No

<b>Outcome 01-01.07</b>	<b>Percentage increase in Animal-related emergency management activities</b>
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**Short Definition: The percent change of:** 1) the number of additional animal-related plans prepared by local jurisdictions; (2) the number of trainings attended or presented; (3) the number of on-the-ground animal disaster response events participated in that will enhance responder expertise; and (4) the numbers of critical infrastructure facilities and systems identified and/or hardened.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measures the extent to which statewide TAHC emergency response, preparedness, and training efforts have been successful. The people of this state and local jurisdictions will benefit from the training, preparedness, and response capabilities of the TAHC.

**Source/Collection of Data:** An average percentage of progress is generated from the following sources: 1) An annual survey of local jurisdictions regarding plans written will be inputted into a TAHC database for yearly progress tracking 2) The percent change of employees trained or administering training to others regarding emergency management issues, based on monthly employee reporting and the HRIS work measures system; 3) Information from the HRIS system will be used to generate the annual percent change of employees responding to a natural or disease disaster; 4) The percent change of agricultural systems and facilities listed

in the FoodSHIELD program and Food and Agriculture Sector Criticality Assessment Tool (FASCAT) will be calculated annually, as will the number of facilities and/or agricultural systems that are actually hardened.

**Method of Calculation:** 1) The difference between the number of local plans in the current year and the previous year will be divided by the number of local plans from the previous year to generate the percent change in local plans written; 2) The difference between the number of people trained or administering emergency management training for the current year and the base year 2007 will be divided by the cumulative number for the base year 2007 to generate the percent change in employees receiving/giving training; 3) The number of natural or disease disaster responses on an annual, per person basis (derived from the HRIS work measures system) will be subtracted from the previous year's measurement and divided by the previous year's measurement to derive a percent change in agency-wide personnel, disaster response; 4) The difference between the number of agricultural systems and/or facilities listed in the FoodSHIELD system or FASCAT assessment, and the number of facilities/systems actually hardened as critical agricultural infrastructure for the State of Texas in the current year and the base year 2010, will be divided by the number of systems/facilities listed in the base year 2010 to derive a percent change in systems and facilities listed and/or hardened as critical infrastructure. An annual percent change in Emergency Management outcome will be derived through averaging the four, percent change figures described above.

**Data Limitations:** Budget restrictions may limit participation in some of these training initiatives, resulting in slower progress. The measure of training could plateau once training in select areas is complete and if employee turnover balances with the rate of normal attrition.

**Calculation Type:** Noncumulative

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target

**New Measure:** Yes

**Key Measure:** No

## ***Field Operations Performance Measures***

### **Field Operations – Output Measures**

<b>Output</b>	<b>Number of livestock shipments inspected</b>
<b>01-01-01.01</b>	

**Short Definition:** Number of livestock shipments inspected by TAHC personnel during the reporting period. This measure includes both vehicles stopped for inspection and the animals held in import pens in Mexico prior to shipment into Texas.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measures the agency's effort related to insuring compliance with inter- and intra-state movement requirements.

**Source/Collection of Data:** Field staff complete a TAHC Form 98-42 (Livestock Shipment Inspection Report) whenever they inspect a shipment. These forms are submitted to the Program Statistics Coordinator in the Central Office.

**Method of Calculation:** Quarterly, the Program Statistics Coordinator counts the TAHC Form 98-42s submitted during the period and prepares a summary report.

**Data Limitations:** An outbreak of a disease requiring a quarantine Area would cause an increase in surveillance in that Area and a resulting variance from targeted performance.

**Calculation Type:** Cumulative

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** Yes

**Output**                      **Number of surveillance inspections conducted**  
**01-01-01.02**

**Short Definition:** The number of inspections conducted by TAHC personnel at livestock markets, slaughter plants, fairs, racetracks, feedlots, premises, etc. during the reporting period.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measures the agency's general visual inspections of livestock for signs of disease.

**Source/Collection of Data:** HRIS

**Method of Calculation:** Count of the number of instances of activity code 008 (Inspection).

**Data Limitations:** Any disease outbreak would result in additional inspections and therefore a variance from target.

**Calculation Type:** Cumulative

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

**Output**                      **Number of cases identified for evaluation and tracing to herds**  
**01-01-01.03**                      **or flocks of origin**

**Short Definition:** The number of animals identified through serological tests conducted by TAHC field personnel or disclosure of lesions at slaughter during the reporting period that signal to TAHC personnel that tracing action and research must be conducted (signal animals).

**Purpose/Importance:** This measures the agency's effort to identify the original source of infection.

**Source/Collection of Data:** GDB, GDB COVSNAT and Profiler

**Method of Calculation:** GDB--number of animals on field investigation of test reactor forms (TAHC forms 91-28, 91-28S, and USDA form VS 6-35); plus Profiler—Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) with a reason of diagnostic, adjacent, or area; plus GDB COVSNAT—Scrapie Trace Animals

**Data Limitations:** Any disease outbreak would result in the identification of additional signal animals and, therefore, a variance from target. Anything that caused a dramatic increase or decrease in the number of animals moving through the market system could result in identification of additional infected animals.

**Calculation Type:** Cumulative

**Desired Performance:** Lower than target (Lower is desirable because it indicates that we are finding fewer cases than expected.)

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

**Output**                      **Number of cases identified for determination of presence or**  
**01-01-01.04**                      **absence of disease**

**Short Definition:** The number of signal animals diagnosed through supplemental testing conducted by TAHC field personnel, plus the number of adjacent herds identified for testing, plus the number of foreign animal disease (FAD) investigations.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measures the agency's efforts to identify animals which may have been exposed.

**Source/Collection of Data:** GDB, Profiler and manual count

**Method of Calculation:** Number of adjacent herds pending testing plus Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) tests conducted with a reactor on the premise (these are also included in Number of cases identified for evaluation and tracing to herds or flocks of origin); plus manual count of FAD investigations; plus number of TB Gamma Interferon tests conducted

**Data Limitations:** Anything that caused a dramatic increase or decrease in the number of animals moving through the market system could result in identification of additional infected animals and, therefore, result in additional adjacent testing. Disease detection in different areas of the state will result in different levels of adjacent testing--herds in east Texas have more adjacent herds than herds in west Texas.

**Calculation Type:** Cumulative

**Desired Performance:** Lower than target (Lower is desirable because it indicates that we are finding fewer cases than expected.)

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

**Output**                      **Number of herd management documents developed**

**01-01-01.05**

**Short Definition:** The total number of herd management documents developed during the reporting period cooperatively between the herd owner or manager and agency personnel.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measures the agency's efforts to work cooperatively with herd owners and managers to establish a plan for testing animals.

**Source/Collection of Data:** Profiler

**Method of Calculation:** Count of the number of records with an action code of HP (herd plan) plus the records with an action code of ID (identified) or QH (quarantined herd) with a reason code of ITA (initial test agreement).

**Data Limitations:** This is a cooperative effort which requires the participation of the herd owner or manager. We have the authority to issue quarantines and hold orders but we cannot guarantee cooperation.

**Calculation Type:** Cumulative

**Desired Performance:** Lower than target (Lower is desirable because it indicates that we are finding fewer cases than expected.)

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

**Output**                      **Number of animal movement records processed**

**01-01-01.06**

**Short Definition:** This number includes incoming health certificates reviewed for compliance. Texas certificates issued for out-of-state shipments, permits issued allowing movement and commuter herd/flock agreements in effect.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measure provides an indication of the movement of animals into, within, and out of the state.

**Source/Collection of Data:** PTS and manual count

**Method of Calculation:** Staff Services count of the incoming health certificates; plus Permits Section count of Texas certificates issued for out-of-state shipments and commuter herd/flock agreements; plus PTS--permits issued.

**Data Limitations:** The number is dependent on the need of producers to move animals due to sale, climatic conditions, economic gain/loss, etc.

**Calculation Type:** Cumulative

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

**Output**                      **Emergency management response hours**

**01-01-01.07**

**Short Definition:** The number of staff hours expended in response to an emergency management event in Texas.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measure addresses the emergency response hours spent by agency staff during an emergency management event or activity whether the emergency is a disease, or a natural or man-made event.

**Source/Collections of Data:** HRIS/WMS

**Method of Calculation:** The total number of hours recorded against the following project codes: 003 (Emergency Management Response – Natural or man-made) and 015 (Emergency Management Response – Disease) and any new project codes created to capture costs related to specific response events.

**Data Limitations:** This measure does not include hours expended in preparation and training.

**Calculation Type:** Cumulative

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target

**New Measure:** Yes

**Key Measure:** No

Output 01-01-01.08	Number of foreign animal disease contacts and consultations
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**Short Definition:** The number of diagnostic contacts and consultations made by TAHC veterinarians in response to a possible or actual FAD investigation. Contacts and consultations may be via phone or in person and include any non-business hour diagnostic contacts made by USDA veterinarians as part of the TAHC surveillance and detection collaboration.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measures the agency's efforts to quickly provide comprehensive surveillance and coordinate response efforts for damaging diseases or conditions affecting livestock or poultry in Texas.

**Source/Collection:** HRIS/WMS

**Method of Calculation:** The total number of staff contacts and number of consultations recorded using activity codes 018 (Contacts/Lineups) or 020 (Consultation) with project codes 014 (Emergency Management Planning – Disease) and 015 (Emergency Management Response - Disease) using any species or location code; and, non-business hours contacts or consultations by on-call USDA veterinarians on behalf of TAHC as calculated from the on-call reporting document.

**Data Limitations:** This data only measures contacts to determine if an actual FAD response investigation is warranted, and will not track the actual investigations. This measure does not include contacts or consultations for natural or man-made disaster activities nor does it include contacts or consultations related solely to FAD planning or training activities.

**Calculation Type:** Cumulative.

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target

**New Measure:** Yes

**Key Measure:** No

## Field Operations – Efficiency Measures

Efficiency 01-01-01.01	Average number of days from date of disclosure of suspicious case to location of herd or flock of origin
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**Short Definition:** The total number of days for all cases to trace signal animals to the herd or premise of origin during the reporting period divided by the number of cases traced to the herd or premise of origin during the reporting period.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measures how soon the agency is able to locate the herd or flock of origin--the quicker we make the determination, the quicker we can limit additional exposure.

**Source/Collection of Data:** GDB

**Method of Calculation:** An average is obtained by dividing the sum of the difference between the closure date and the initial date for all cases with a closure date in the reporting period by the number of cases with a closure date in the reporting period.

**Data Limitations:** The agency's ability to identify the herd or premise of origin is dependent on the quality of the record keeping of the entities that handled the animal (e.g. dealers, markets, feedlots, etc.).

**Calculation Type:** Noncumulative

**Desired Performance:** Lower than target

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

**Efficiency**                      **Average number of days from identification of herd or flock to diagnosis**  
**01-01-01.02**

**Short Definition:** The total number of days to diagnose diseases during the reporting period divided by the total number of cases during the reporting period.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measures how soon the agency is able to complete the diagnosis--the quicker we make the determination, the quicker we can proceed to releasing or quarantining the herd or flock.

**Source/Collection of Data:** Profiler

**Method of Calculation:** An average is obtained by dividing the sum of the difference between the quarantine or release date (once a diagnosis is made, the hold order is released or replaced with a quarantine, so this is the diagnosis date) and the hold order date for all herds and flocks quarantined or released during the reporting period by the number of herds and flocks quarantined or released during the reporting period.

**Data Limitations:** Adverse weather conditions can delay the follow-up testing required to complete the diagnosis. The length of time required to run diagnostic tests will impact this measure--a TB culture takes months to run.

**Calculation Type:** Noncumulative

**Desired Performance:** Lower than target

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

### Field Operations – Explanatory Measure

**Explanatory**                      **Number of restricted movement permits issued**  
**01-01-01.01**

**Short Definition:** The total number of restricted movement permits issued by TAHC personnel during the reporting period as a result of quarantines and hold orders on herds and flocks of origin.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measures the agency's efforts to contain diseases and insures that the agency is aware of movement of exposed and potentially exposed animals.

**Source/Collection of Data:** Profiler

**Method of Calculation:** A count of the number of the USDA form VS 1-27s (Permit for Movement of Restricted Animals).

**Data Limitations:** Any disease outbreak would result in additional quarantines which would result in the issuance of additional movement permits, resulting in a variance from target.

**Calculation Type:** Cumulative

**Desired Performance:** Lower than target (Lower is desirable because it indicates that we are finding fewer cases than expected.)

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

**Explanatory**                      **Percent of time in emergency preparedness training and activities**  
**01-01-01.02**

**Short Definition:** The percentage of staff time spent in meetings and training that is related to emergency preparedness.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measures the extent to which agency personnel are trained, or train others, to deal with livestock issues related to emergencies. These emergencies would include natural and man-made disasters.

**Source/Collections of Data:** HRIS

**Method of Calculation:** A percentage is obtained by dividing the number of hours staff spend in activity codes 020 (consultation), 025 (meetings and training) and 075 (emergency management exercise) with a project code of 002 (Emergency Management Preparation – Natural or Man-Made) or 014 (Emergency Management Preparation – Disease) by the total hours staff spend in activity codes 020, 025 and 075.

**Data Limitations:** The travel expenditure cap may force the agency to limit the travel authorized for participation in these activities.

**Calculation Type:** Noncumulative

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target

**New Measure:** No (previously classified as outcome measure)

**Key Measure:** No

### **Explanatory                      Emergency management preparation hours** **01-01-01.03**

**Short Definition:** The number of staff hours expended in planning and preparation activities related to emergency management in Texas.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measure addresses the planning and preparation hours spent by agency staff to be ready to respond in the event of an actual emergency event.

**Source/Collections of Data:** HRIS/WMS

**Method of Calculation:** The total number of hours recorded against the following project codes: 002 (Emergency Management Planning – Natural, or man-made) and 014 (Emergency Management Planning – Disease).

**Data Limitations:** This measure does not include hours expended in response activities nor does it include hours expended by agency staff in attending or delivering training related to emergency management.

**Calculation Type:** Cumulative

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target

**New Measure:** Yes

**Key Measure:** No

## ***Diagnostic/Epidemiological Support Performance Measures***

### **Diagnostic/Epidemiological Support Output Measures**

#### **Output                                      Number of specimens processed through the State/Federal 01-01-02.01                                      Cooperative Laboratory System**

**Short Definition:** Number of specimens processed--tests include brucellosis or pseudorabies tests conducted on blood samples collected at livestock markets or slaughter plants; brucellosis or pseudorabies tests to meet movement requirements, private sale, or herd certification requirements; brucellosis milk tests; blood samples from herds or flocks tested because they are adjacent to infected herds or are at increased risk; and the number of ectoparasite samples submitted for evaluation.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measures the agency's efforts to identify and/or confirm infection and infestation.

**Source/Collection of Data:** Lab

**Method of Calculation:** The sum of total samples processed plus total parasite ID from the lab report.

**Data Limitations:** The number of specimens processed is dependent on the number of specimens submitted.

**Calculation Type:** Cumulative

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** Yes

#### **Output                                      Number of epidemiological investigation reviews completed 01-01-02.02**

**Short Definition:** The number of disease investigation reports reviewed plus the number of epidemiological summaries or special studies prepared by the TAHC epidemiologists. These reviews are conducted to ensure that the investigation was complete and thorough.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measures the efforts of the agency's epidemiologists to confirm presence or absence of disease.

**Source/Collection of Data:** HRIS

**Method of Calculation:** Count of the number of instances of activity code 024 (epidemiological review) reported by the epidemiologists.

**Data Limitations:** Any disease outbreak would result in additional investigations resulting in a variance from target.

**Calculation Type:** Cumulative

**Desired Performance:** Lower than target (Lower is desirable because it indicates that we are finding fewer cases than expected.)

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

## **Output                      Number of epidemiological consultations**

**01-01-02.03**

**Short Definition:** The number of consultations between the TAHC epidemiologists and other TAHC staff and herd owners. Epidemiologists provide subject matter expertise to staff making program related decisions.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measure reflects the time spent by TAHC epidemiologists in support of field staff and herd owners.

**Source/Collection of Data:** HRIS

**Method of Calculation:** Count of the number of instances of activity code 020 (consultation) reported by the epidemiologists.

**Data Limitations:** Any disease outbreak would result in additional interaction between the epidemiologists and field staff resulting in a variance from target.

**Calculation Type:** Cumulative

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

## **Diagnostic/Epidemiological Support Efficiency Measures**

### **Efficiency                      Average time to conduct an epidemiological consultation**

**01-01-02.01**

**Short Definition:** The total number of hours spent in epidemiological consultation divided by the number of consultations conducted.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measures the average length of an epidemiological consultation.

**Source/Collection of Data:** HRIS

**Method of Calculation:** An average is obtained by dividing the sum of all hours reported in activity code 020 (consultation) by the epidemiologists by the sum of the number of consultations.

**Data Limitations:** Any disease outbreak would result in additional consultations which could result in a variance from target.

**Calculation Type:** Noncumulative

**Desired Performance:** Lower than target

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

## Promote Compliance Performance Measures

### Promote Compliance Output Measures

#### Output 01-01-03.01 Number of compliance actions completed

**Short Definition:** Compliance actions completed include warning letters, penning letters, demand letters and investigations, which have resulted in filing injunctions with the Attorney General, filing complaints with a Justice of the Peace, administrative proceedings, or administrative penalties.

**Purpose/Importance:** This demonstrates agency commitment to insuring statewide compliance with regulatory requirements. The compliance action request forms document the type of violation and identify the participants. The information shows the agency has undertaken an appropriate response to insure compliance.

**Source/Collection of Data:** The Legal and Compliance Access database, developed by the TAHC, tracks violations of agency regulations and actions taken. The data is collected on a TAHC form 98-44 (Compliance Action Request) completed by TAHC and DPS staff. Legal and Compliance personnel maintain and update the data.

**Method of Calculation:** The Legal Coordinator enters TAHC form 98-44s into the Legal and Compliance Access database. A report is then run to obtain the number of completed compliance actions.

**Data Limitations:** The number only provides information regarding non-compliance activities which have been discovered and documented.

**Calculation Type:** Cumulative

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** Yes

#### Output 01-01-03.02 Number of compliance investigations conducted

**Short Definition:** Compliance investigations, which involve field work by TAHC investigators, are more complex and time-consuming than the other types of compliance actions. These investigations are a subset of the compliance actions measure and indicate serious violations which need to be handled through legal enforcement.

**Purpose/Importance:** The number of investigations conducted allows the agency to develop the information related to compliance requests in order to most effectively arrive at a resolution. Results of the investigation may vary from sending a compliance letter to filing a complaint.

**Source/Collection of Data:** manual count

**Method of Calculation:** The Legal Coordinator counts the number of TAHC form 98-44s (Compliance Action Request) for which the requested action has been completed.

**Data Limitations:** This is count of the investigations conducted; it does not address the scope of the work required. Some investigations are very complex and time-consuming.

**Calculation Type:** Cumulative

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

#### Output 01-01-03.03 Number of hours expended in providing public information activities

**Short Definition:** Hours spent by field staff providing information in one-on-one settings, plus presentations to groups; plus the hours spent by the Public Information Department preparing news releases, newsletters, fact sheets, presentations, plus the hours spent making presentations and staffing exhibits.

**Purpose/Importance:** This measure addresses the hours spent by agency staff providing information to individuals and groups about agency services and regulations.

**Source/Collection of Data:** HRIS

**Method of Calculation:** A report is run against the HRIS, to report the sum of all hours coded to activity code 069 (Media Relations/Public Information) in addition to the total number of hours performed by the Public Information Department.

**Data Limitations:** Any disease outbreak would reduce the amount of time available for this type of activity.

**Calculation Type:** Cumulative

**Desired Performance:** Higher than target

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

## Promote Compliance Efficiency Measure

Efficiency	Average number of days to complete a compliance action
01-01-03.01	

**Short Definition:** The total number of days required to complete a compliance action divided by the number of compliance actions completed during the reporting period.

**Purpose/Importance:** This demonstrates the agency's commitment to resolve compliance issues in a timely manner.

**Source/Collection of Data:** Legal and Compliance Access database

**Method of Calculation:** An average is obtained by dividing the sum of the difference between the completed date and the assigned date for all compliance actions completed in the reporting period by the number of compliance actions completed in the reporting period.

**Data Limitations:** The measure is a composite of the relative short time required to complete a compliance letter; a longer period to complete an investigation and then send a compliance letter; and the longest period to complete an investigation and initiate compliance action. The composition of each of those types of activities within the reporting period will impact the average.

**Calculation Type:** Noncumulative

**Desired Performance:** Lower than target

**New Measure:** No

**Key Measure:** No

# Appendix E – Agency Workforce Plan

## I. AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Texas cattle fever tick, a parasite less than an eighth of an inch in length, played a pivotal role in the 1893 creation of the Livestock Sanitary Commission, which in 1959 was renamed the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC). Since that time, TAHC and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) have worked cooperatively with livestock producers on animal health issues in furtherance of the agency's vision, mission, and philosophy.

Thirteen Commissioners appointed by the Governor, representing all segments of the livestock industry and the public, oversee and guide the agency's activities. The Governor designates the Chair.

The Commissioners appoint an Executive Director who supervises the agency's activities. The TAHC operating budget is prepared and approved by the Commissioners on an annual basis, whereas the TAHC Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR) is prepared and submitted to the Legislative Budget Board and Governor's Office for Budget, Planning, and Policy during the summer of each even-numbered year as part of the Strategic Planning and LAR processes. The State Legislature approves the operating budget and LAR and establishes policy which is implemented and executed by TAHC under the direction of the Executive Director and the Commissioners.

TAHC has specific statutory authority and responsibility to control and eradicate any disease or agent of transmission that threatens the livestock and poultry of Texas, as outlined in Chapters 161 through 168 of the Texas Agriculture Code, Vernon's Annotated Texas Statutes. The agency is vested with the responsibility of protecting all livestock, domestic animals, and domestic fowl from diseases stated in the statutes, or recognized as maladies by the veterinary profession. TAHC is authorized to act to eradicate or control any disease or agent of transmission for any disease that affects livestock, exotic livestock, domestic animals, domestic fowl, and exotic fowl, regardless of whether or not the disease is communicable. In order to perform these duties and responsibilities, TAHC is authorized to control the sale and distribution of veterinary biologics, except rabies vaccine; regulate the entry of livestock, domestic animals, and domestic fowl into the state; and, control the movement of livestock.

An increased awareness of the threat of agroterrorism attack, as well as the impact of natural disasters on animals, has expanded the agency's role in emergency management and Homeland Security activities. The Governor added TAHC to the State Emergency Management Council in 2001 and to the Homeland Security Council in 2005. Because of TAHC's expertise in animal health, the State Coordinator of Emergency Management designated TAHC as the state's lead agency for all animal issues involving emergencies, including natural and man-made disasters and acts of agroterrorism, as well as naturally occurring animal disease outbreaks. TAHC also participates on the Emergency Management Steering Committee (formerly called the Texas Emergency Response Team), a joint effort between TAHC and USDA to prepare for and respond to foreign animal disease outbreaks and other disasters.

The TAHC workforce is comprised of field inspectors, veterinarians, veterinary epidemiologists, laboratory personnel, and administrative staff.

TAHC is funded by a combination of state general revenue funds and federal funds, primarily from USDA. For the 2010 – 2011 Biennium, TAHC has an authorized workforce of 214 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs). Riders in the General Appropriations Act provide contingency authority for TAHC to add additional FTEs to the extent that federal funds are allocated for salary costs; none of these contingent FTEs count against the agency FTE cap. Included within the FTE cap are seven fully federally funded laboratory positions serving the State-Federal laboratory system.

As Texas hones its competitiveness in the global food market, TAHC programs support animal agriculture, focusing on the control and eradication of domestic diseases such as brucellosis, tuberculosis, and Aujeszky's/pseudorabies and ensuring the basic infrastructure to reduce the risk of newly emerging diseases, foreign animal diseases and exotic pests.

Efficient and effective surveillance is supported by a modern and competent laboratory system. Veterinarians and Veterinary Epidemiologists oversee the diagnosis of diseases and assure appropriate tracing of the movement of exposed or infected animals to determine the origin of infection and minimize the transmission of disease.

At the height of the cattle brucellosis eradication campaign, more than 350 employees worked for the TAHC. Most of them were animal health inspectors who tested cattle for brucellosis. In the past decade, the TAHC has dropped its full-time equivalent workforce by more than 30 percent, while maintaining a basic infrastructure of cross-trained staff capable of handling a variety of diseases and species of animals.

Despite the reduction in agency staffing and funding over the past decade, TAHC's role in animal agriculture in Texas continues to expand and become more complex, particularly in light of its growing role related to emergency management. Within the constraints of our current human and financial resources, TAHC faces difficult decisions to prioritize its animal disease control and eradication programs, emergency management preparation and response events, and emerging diseases to determine which of those programs competing for limited resources to conduct at optimum level and which programs will be conducted at less than optimum levels. Continued escalation of the current fever tick outbreak in South Texas cattle and wildlife required the agency to ask for additional FTEs to address the issue, but issues in our South Texas area and along the border of Mexico continue to be of major concern. Staffing of this area continues to be problematic.

## **A. Agency Vision, Mission, Philosophy**

### *Vision*

Through the cooperative efforts of the Texas Animal Health Commission, animal producers, and allied industry groups, the animal population of Texas is healthy and secure.

### *Mission*

The mission of the Texas Animal Health Commission is:

- to protect the animal industry from, and/or mitigate the effects of domestic, foreign and emerging diseases;
- to increase the marketability of Texas livestock commodities at the state, national and international level;
- to promote and ensure animal health and productivity;
- to protect human health from animal diseases and conditions that are transmissible to people; and
- to prepare for and respond to emergency situations involving animals by conducting agency business in a responsive, cooperative and transparent manner.

### *Philosophy*

The Texas Animal Health Commission will carry out its mission with honesty, openness and efficiency. We will use the best available resources, technology and trained personnel to achieve the agency goals. We will listen to and respect the opinions and concerns of the people of Texas. We will encourage and promote open communication between all parties. We will strive to continuously develop new, or enhance existing relationships among government, industry, and private citizens to realize our vision of a healthy and secure animal population in Texas.

**B. Strategic Goal, Objective, and Strategies Goal**

To protect and enhance the health of Texas animal populations, facilitating productivity and marketability while sustaining reduced human health risks.

**Objective**

To minimize the impact of disease on Texas animal populations by maintaining or reducing known levels of diseases; and, to enhance preparedness for emergency response by increasing the staff activities devoted to emergency preparedness annually.

**Strategy**

Monitor, control and/or eradicate diseases and infestations through statewide field based animal health management and assurance programs.

**Strategy**

Provide epidemiological expertise, serological testing, microbiological confirmation, and parasite identification services for diseases and parasitisms of regulatory importance to the animal agriculture industries in Texas.

**Strategy**

Promote voluntary compliance with legal requirements by providing education/information, and to resolve violations through effective use of legal enforcement and compliance activities.

**C. Impact of Growing Animal Health Programs on TAHC Strategies**

New animal health management programs, existing animal health programs, and increased regulatory requirements, at both the federal and state levels, are expected to impact agency workload priorities and workforce structure over the next five years. TAHC must manage limited state and federal resources appropriated to the agency for a growing list of animal health programs, projects, and initiatives, which will drastically impact the TAHC's resource and workforce needs.

**II. CURRENT WORKFORCE PROFILE (SUPPLY ANALYSIS)**

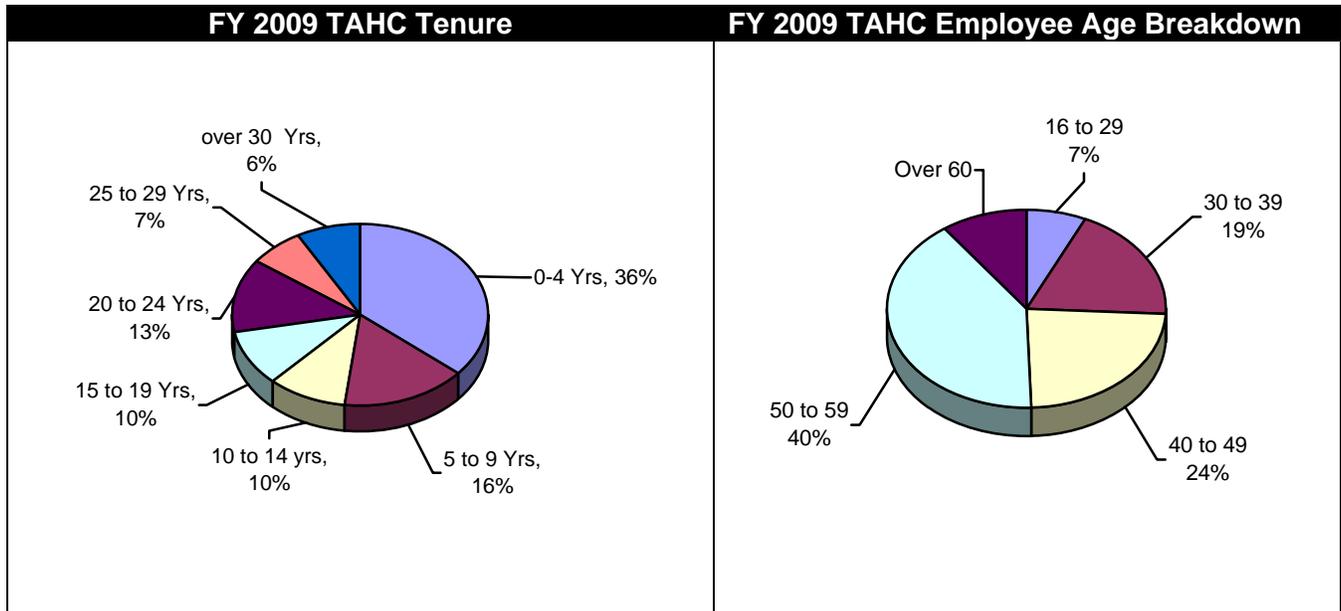
**A. Critical Workforce Skills**

To fulfill the mission of the TAHC, employees must have a variety of necessary skills appropriate to their job functions.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Large-animal veterinarians</li> <li>✓ Epidemiological experts</li> <li>✓ Animal emergency response planning staff</li> <li>✓ Microbiologists and laboratory tech staff</li> <li>✓ Staff who have experience and expertise in the safe and effective evaluation and handling of livestock</li> <li>✓ Personnel with GIS knowledge/GPS skills</li> <li>✓ Financial/Accounting professionals</li> <li>✓ Experienced and knowledgeable support staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Computer programmers, systems analysts, database administrators and webmasters</li> <li>✓ Staff skilled in customer service</li> <li>✓ Staff experienced in promulgating and enforcing rules and regulations</li> <li>✓ Grant writers</li> <li>✓ Interagency, interstate, and international relations staff</li> <li>✓ Project managers</li> <li>✓ Skilled managers and supervisors</li> <li>✓ Staff skilled and experienced in communication with industry representatives</li> </ul>
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## B. Workforce Demographics

The following charts profile the agency's workforce for fiscal year 2009. TAHC's workforce is comprised of sixty-three percent males and thirty-seven percent females. Seventy-five percent of employees are forty years of age or older, and forty-nine percent of employees have at least ten years of service with the agency.

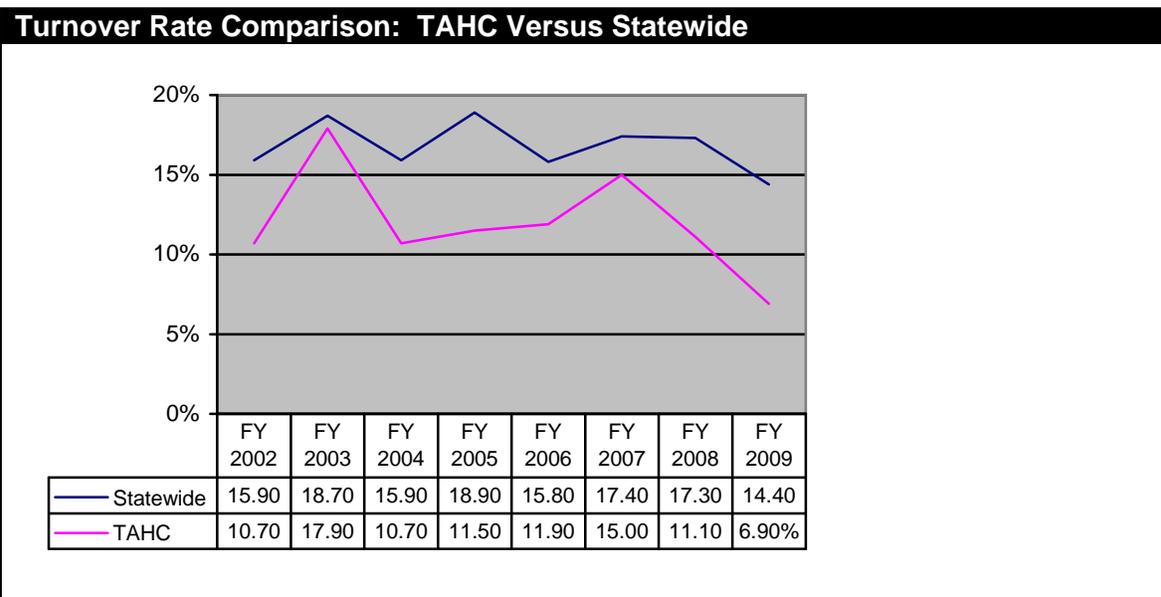


The following table compares the percentage of African American, Hispanic American, and Female TAHC employees for fiscal year 2009. The TAHC has been working to address the under-representation of African American, Hispanic American, and female employees by expanding its targeted recruitment resources.

JOB CATEGORY	African American TAHC %	African American State %	Hispanic American TAHC %	Hispanic American State %	Females TAHC %	Females State %
Officials/Administration	0.0%	9.0%	5.0%	23.7%	26.3%	8.8%
Professional	4.1%	11.7%	9.1%	19.9%	21.5%	4.5%
Technical	12.5%	17.0%	12.5%	27.0%	58.3%	5.6%
Administrative Support	2.2%	13.2%	26.7%	31.9%	86.7%	6.2%

## C. Employee Turnover

Based on turnover statistics published by the State Auditor's Office for voluntary separations, involuntary separations, and retirements by agency including interagency transfers, the TAHC has a history of maintaining a turnover rate that is below the state's overall turnover rate, as illustrated in the following graph.



The turnover rate for FY 2009 was lower than it has been in many years. While it is hoped that this trend will continue, analysis indicates that it was most likely a result of a slow economy and job market. TAHC consistently enjoys a turnover rate below the statewide average. However, in the past few years, TAHC began to lose long-tenured staff with specialized skills and knowledge that are critical to its success in managing the health of Texas’ livestock and poultry. The common reasons cited by TAHC separating employees have been “better pay/benefits,” “no or little career advancement opportunities,” and “retirement.”

**D. Retirement Eligibility**

TAHC continues to face the challenge of losing many of its long-tenured staff to retirement, and we expect this trend to continue through the next 10 years. With a projection of 39% of its authorized FTE’s eligible to retire over that period of time, the agency must plan strategies for filling these vacancies with knowledgeable and skilled personnel.

**III. FUTURE WORKFORCE PROFILE (DEMAND ANALYSIS)**

The United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS), is placing increased regulatory demands on Texas and other states that are facing critical animal health disease issues. In addition, the livestock industry in the State of Texas is setting high expectations for the TAHC to initiate stepped-up disease surveillance and regulatory enforcement on all disease programs. As a result, our animal health inspectors and veterinarians will become even more important to the economic viability of the livestock and poultry industries in Texas. It is critical for the TAHC to be able to recruit, hire and retain highly-skilled personnel to occupy these positions.

It is also clear that the TAHC must address the issues of competitive salaries and career ladders in order to mitigate the rate of loss of critical staff to other governmental agencies and to the private sector. Succession plans for retaining critical knowledge, skills, and abilities as long-tenured staff retires is also a major issue for the agency.

## A. Critical Functions

- The TAHC needs to be able to attract and retain large animal veterinarians and veterinarians trained in epidemiology, a specialty area where a nation-wide shortage exists. Large animal veterinarians are becoming scarce as vet schools are graduating more students who opt to go into companion animal practice. A study done by the Association of American Veterinary Colleges indicated that fewer than ten percent of veterinarian students across the country are going into food-animal jobs. Experts say that twice that number will be needed to fill the vacancies that exist. In order to attract and retain large animal veterinarians and epidemiologists, the agency must pay at or above similar jobs in Texas state government, other states, USDA-APHIS, and comparable private entities for similar jobs.
- The emphasis of TAHC's animal health inspectors, veterinarians, and epidemiologists is shifting from a program geared toward cattle brucellosis and tuberculosis eradication to one that encompasses a variety of species (cattle, hogs, sheep and goats, horses, chickens and poultry, deer, exotic hoofstock, and exotic animals) and a variety of diseases (Johnes, pseudorabies, scrapie, equine infectious anemia, equine piroplasmiasis, avian influenza, laryngotracheitis, chronic wasting disease, etc.) The ability, willingness, and knowledge to work with a variety of species and diseases are expanding requirements.
- Adequate funding is needed to update and maintain agency career ladders. Without viable career ladders, it will become increasingly difficult to attract and retain qualified staff to perform animal health-related, administrative, laboratory, and support staff duties and responsibilities within the agency, especially when entry-level pay is low.
- It is imperative that the agency keep up-to-date with technological changes for animal disease tracking. Therefore, the agency must be able to recruit, hire, and retain staff who have the knowledge and expertise to understand, trouble-shoot, and update these technologies.
- Expert managerial skills and abilities are needed to continue strong leadership within the agency.
- Agency microbiologists and technicians must be equipped with state-of-the-art laboratory equipment in order for the agency to fulfill its mission of animal disease, detection, surveillance and eradication. Laboratory staff must receive pay that is comparable with the labor market and be trained to operate the equipment effectively.
- To be able to capitalize on funding that is available from various sources, including the Federal government, the agency must have skilled grant writers to assist us in securing needed funding.
- Each biennium the agency is asked to provide additional services and to handle new projects, many times without additional funding or funding sources. To ensure that these projects are accomplished with maximum efficiency, the agency needs to train or employ staff with project management skills and expertise.
- The need for animal emergency management planners to help the local jurisdictions develop sound animal emergency response plans will continue and grow in the future.
- In order to assist the epidemiologists in disease tracking, the agency needs to be able to hire and retain staff that are skilled in GIS/GPS programs.

## B. Expected Workforce Changes

- Due to the agency's increasing role in emergency management, all TAHC staff must be trained and ready to undertake new roles and responsibilities when animal emergencies arise. To do so, staff must be adequately trained in utilizing the federal government's incident command structure and be able to activate the structure to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property and/or natural resources as a result of either human or natural-phenomena caused events,
- A smaller ratio of veterinary and epidemiology staff-to-animal health inspectors is needed to be able to adequately manage domestic and foreign animal disease. With the growing list of animal species and

disease types with which all staff must be knowledgeable, the veterinary and epidemiology roles will dramatically increase.

- Animal health inspectors' and veterinarians' duties are evolving in another way also. Technological changes are occurring rapidly, with increased technological usage of Global Positioning Systems (GPS), Global Information Systems (GIS), laptop computers, hand-held tag-reading devices, etc. While these technological changes should aid field staff in the efficient and effective performance of duties, these are new skill sets that have been added to their jobs. It is expected that technological changes will continually alter their duties and responsibilities in the future.
- Field staff must be able to effectively communicate with market owners and livestock producers, and to educate them on agency rules and state/federal laws pertaining to sale, movement, quarantine and disposal of livestock, poultry and exotic animals. This new skill set has become increasingly important during the last several years and will continue its importance in the future.
- Staff skilled in effective grant-writing will be crucial to ensure the agency is awarded funding from federal sources to perform the duties and responsibilities required of staff.
- Retirements of long-tenured staff with vast institutional knowledge of the workings of the agency and the livestock/poultry industry in Texas will leave the agency with knowledge gaps in its workforce

### **C. Anticipated Increases in Number of Employees Needed**

- Additional FTEs will be needed to adequately perform the agency's emergency management duties and responsibilities.
- Additional information technology staff will be needed to plan, implement, trouble-shoot, and train staff to utilize new and evolving technologies, including GIS/GPS technologies.
- The increased responsibilities of the field inspectors, veterinarians, and epidemiologists due to new and emergency animal diseases and the livestock/poultry growth rate in Texas could increase the number of staff needed.
- Because of the continued complexities involved in recognizing, categorizing and effectively planning for eradication efforts of new and emerging animal disease, more veterinary and epidemiological staff will be required to face future demands.
- The continued effort to fight fever ticks in south Texas continues to stretch agency human and financial resources to its limit. With no end in sight, the agency may be forced to request additional funding for this endeavor.
- The agency will also have to hire more people or outsource required EM activities related to "credentialing" of first responders, as currently directed by DHS.

### **D. Future Workforce Skills Needed**

- Risk analysis and risk management skills for Epidemiologists.
- GIS development and GPS skills.
- Expertise in new and emerging diseases and foreign animal diseases.
- Safe and effective techniques for tissue and blood sample collection.
- Use of state-of-the-art laboratory equipment and diagnostic techniques.
- Use and maintenance of personal protective equipment to safeguard against highly infectious emerging diseases.
- Development and delivery of public information presentations.
- Collaboration, negotiation, and public relations skills.
- Project management skills.
- Strategic planning and business plan development and implementation.
- Supervisory and general management skills.

## **IV. GAP ANALYSIS**

### **A. Anticipated Shortage of Workers**

The agency's current FTE authorization may not be sufficient to address the increasing workload and expanding functions. Veterinarians and epidemiologists will be needed in greater numbers as the Texas Animal Health Commission's role in dealing with new and emerging animal diseases evolve. The agency's involvement in emergency response for the state of Texas continues to grow beyond the current FTE allocations in that area. Laboratory staff and administrative support staff will need to be hired in sufficient numbers to meet regulatory and statutory requirements.

The continued effort to fight fever ticks in south Texas is stretching agency human capital to its limit. With no end in sight, the agency may be forced to request additional personnel for this endeavor.

Our ability to recruit and retain the needed staff will continue to be limited by the agency's state and federal funding.

### **B. Critical Skills Shortage**

- Veterinarians, epidemiologists, laboratory staff, and animal health inspectors must develop increased skills and knowledge to work with new and emerging disease issues, to communicate with various producers and industry groups about the agency's programs, and must demonstrate skill in publicly addressing a variety of audiences.
- All staff will need to develop new technological skills to work with increasingly sophisticated databases and software, and GIS/GPS equipment.
- Management staff will need to enhance strategic planning skills and to develop skills in business process planning and execution.
- Grant writing skills for select staff will be required in the future.
- Existing staff should be trained or new staff hired to provide critical project management skills for the agency.
- All staff must be familiar with and practiced in the use of an incident command structure so the agency will be ready and capable of fulfilling its emergency management demands that will be required.

## **V. STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT**

TAHC will work toward achieving the following goals intended to address workforce competency gaps and the overall anticipated shortage of staff.

### **A. Organizational Structure**

*Goal:* Ensure that staff is allocated appropriately to cover workload demands.

*Action Steps:*

- Analyze current allocation and geographic distribution of workers.
- Develop strategic reallocation or redistribution of workers based on analysis and projection of future mission priorities.
- Maintain a cost-effective management-to-staff ratio to ensure maximum productivity and accountability of workers.

### **B. Recruitment and Retention Strategies**

*Goal:* Target key recruitment resources to attract qualified candidates, especially in those areas of under-representation in the agency's workforce.

*Action Steps:*

- Consider the establishment of externship opportunities for veterinary medicine and agricultural science students.
- Identify and contact potential resources for minority recruitment in all areas of the state.

- Identify factors that prevent the agency from competing with other employers and develop strategies to address those factors.

*Goal:* Maintain workplace quality-of-life and develop succession plans.

*Action Steps:*

- Continue to participate in the Survey of Employee Engagement; analyze results and develop strategies to address areas needing improvement.
- Analyze reasons for employee turnover and identify trends.
- Update human resources policies and practices to address the findings of these analyses.
- Provide supervisory skills training.
- Identify positions for which succession planning is critical; focus skills and knowledge training on potential successors.
- Strive for salary parity with other state and federal agencies and the private sector.
- Consistently award merit salary actions for exceptional work performance.

### **C. Career Development and In-Service Training Programs**

*Goal:* Ensure that staff is equipped with necessary and appropriate skills and knowledge to most effectively accomplish the agency's mission.

*Action Steps:*

- Provide training opportunities for veterinarians to achieve required continuing education units for veterinary licensing; to achieve designated epidemiologist status in a number of diseases; and, to update knowledge and skills in new and emerging animal diseases.
- Support and encourage staff attendance at job-relevant conferences and training programs.
- Establish specific job requirements for necessary skills development.
- Based on identified skill requirements, allow employees to utilize the purchased on-line training tool, *Mindleaders*.
- Conduct in-house management conferences to focus on leadership skills development and application.
- Encourage employees who seek new challenges by assigning special projects and providing cross-training.
- Ensure that TAHC managers participate in both internal and external seminars to enhance and further develop managerial skills.
- Update and/or establish career ladders for eligible staff.

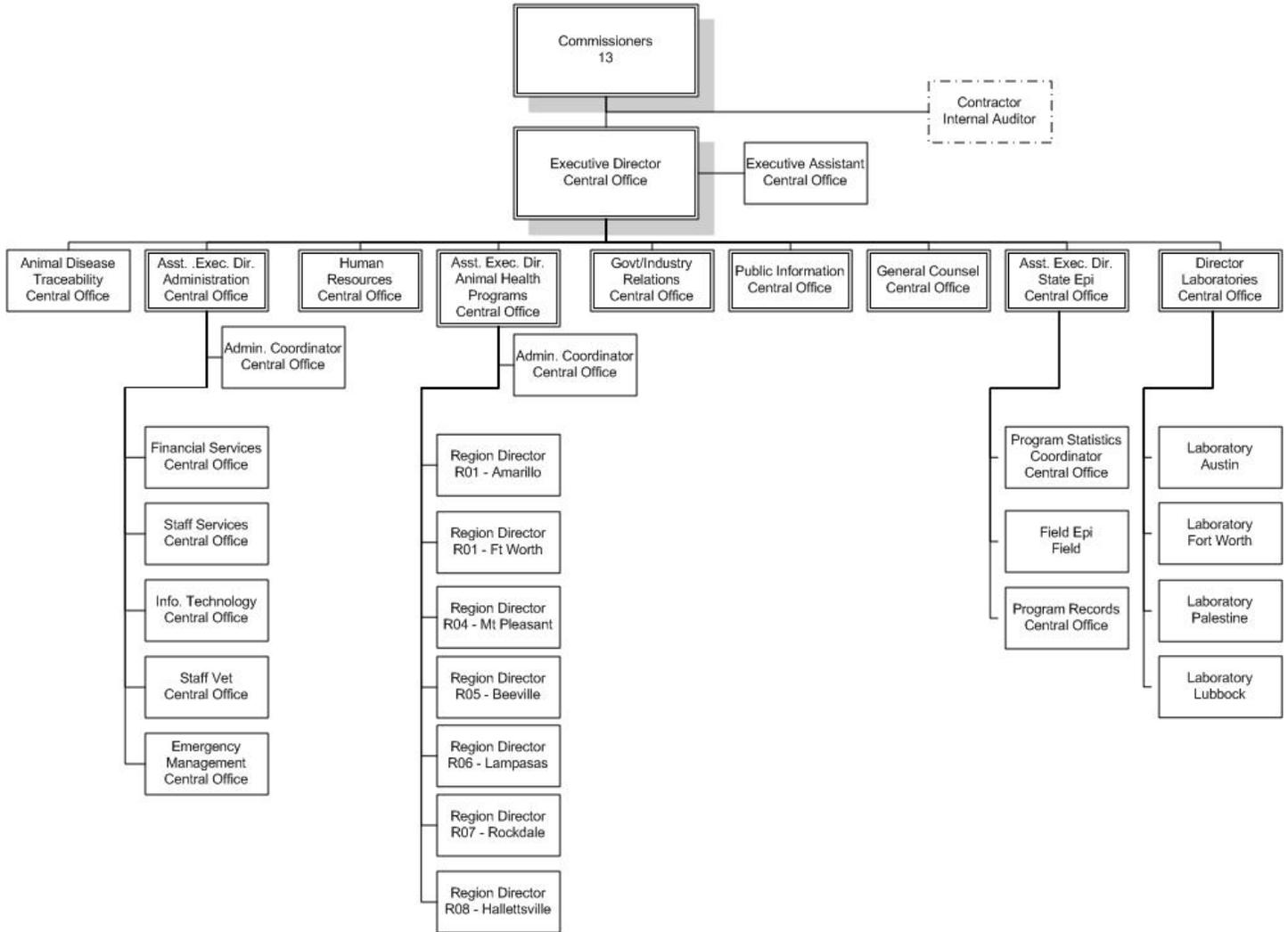
## **VI. WORKFORCE PLAN EVALUATION AND REVISION**

The agency's Workforce Plan will be implemented with the Strategic Plan. It will be re-evaluated biennially to determine if adjustments need to be made due to changes in disease diagnoses, changes in technology, or workload shifts.

The Human Resources Department will work in collaboration with executive staff and division directors to ensure that agency workforce is adequately trained, up-to-date on technological advances that may change the way we do business, and to ensure that planned or unexpected turnover and/or retirements do not leave the agency with knowledge and skill shortages that would prevent the agency from achieving its strategic goals.

## VII. CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

### Texas Animal Health Commission Fiscal Year 2010



## Appendix F – Survey of Employee Engagement – 2009 TAHC Report Summary

During the month of February 2010, TAHC participated in the Survey of Employee Engagement along with many other state agencies; the University of Texas conducts the survey and publishes the survey results and findings for each participating state agency.

The agency is evaluating the results of the survey and comparing scores to those received during the last several surveys. Management will use the survey as a tool to determine what organizational changes need to be made to improve results of further surveys and to ensure employee satisfaction in the workplace.

### SUMMARY:

TAHC had an exceptional response rate of 86% which consisted of 177 out of 206 who responded to the survey online. The following were reported as the agency's areas of strength and areas of concern:

#### Areas of Strength

- Physical Environment; Score 387. The Physical Environment construct captures employees' perceptions of the total work atmosphere and the degree to which employees believe that it is a 'safe' working environment. This construct addresses the 'feel' of the workplace as perceived by the employee.
- Benefits; Score 382. The Benefits construct provides a good indication of the role the benefit package plays in attracting and retaining employees in the organization. It reflects employees' perceptions of how well their benefits package compares to those of other organizations.
- Strategic; Score: 380. The strategic construct reflects employees' thinking about how the organization responds to external influences that should play a role in defining the organization's mission, vision, services, and products. Implied in this construct is the ability of the organization to seek out and work with relevant external entities.

#### Areas of Concern

- Pay; Score: 222. The Pay construct addresses perceptions of the overall compensation package offered by the organization. It describes how well the compensation package "holds up" when employees compare it to similar jobs in other organizations.
- Diversity; Score: 340. The Diversity construct addresses the extent to which employees feel personal differences, such as ethnicity, social class or lifestyle, may result in alienation from the larger organization and missed opportunities for learning or advancement. It examines how the organization understands and uses creativity coming from individual differences to improve organizational effectiveness.
- Internal Communication; Score: 343. The Internal Communication construct captures the organization's communications flow from the top-down, bottom-up, and across divisions/departments. It addresses the extent to which communication exchanges are open, candid, and move the organization toward goal achievement.

Avg	12 Highest Scoring Non-TAHC Specific Questions
4.14	11. I have a clear understanding about my work responsibilities
4.06	1. People in my work group cooperate to get the job done.
4.02	46. I know how my work impacts others in the organization.
3.95	17. I understand the state, local, national, and global issues that impact the organization.

3.93	55. I have access to information about job opportunities, conferences, workshops, and training.
3.92	14. My supervisor gives me the opportunity to do my best work.
3.91	40. Given the type of work I do, my physical workplace meets my needs.
3.90	42. There are sufficient procedures to ensure the safety of employees in the workplace.
3.89	54. I believe I have a career with this organization.
3.88	47. I am encouraged to learn from my mistakes.
3.70	43. I have adequate resources and equipment to do my job.
3.60	2. My work group is actively involved in making work processes more effective.

<b>Avg</b>	<b>12 Lowest Scoring Non-TAHC Specific Questions</b>
2.00	24. My pay keeps pace with the cost of living.
2.23	25. Salaries are competitive with similar jobs in the community.
2.43	26. I feel I am paid fairly for the work I do.
2.87	63. I believe favoritism (special treatment) is not an issue in my organization.
3.13	58. Upper management effectively communicates the reasons behind key decisions.
3.15	61. I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to evaluate my supervisor's performance.
3.17	50. An effort is made to get the opinions of people throughout the organization.
3.22	35. The right information gets to the right people at the right time.
3.24	5. Work groups are trained to incorporate the opinions of each member.
3.27	48. There is a basic trust among employees and supervisors.
3.29	60. I believe we will use the information from this survey to improve our performance.
3.32	53. Every employee is valued.

### **TAHC Specific Survey Questions:**

<b>Avg</b>	<b>Std Dev</b>	<b>Question</b>
3.48	0.95	1. Agency management clearly communicates with all staff on important issues affecting the agency's duties and mission.
3.52	0.80	2. Overall, I believe the agency was well represented and the results were positive during the last legislative session.
3.51	0.96	3. The agency's executive staff (including the Executive Director, the General Counsel, and the Assistant Executive Directors) have provided effective leadership and clear direction over the past year.
3.40	1.14	4. The schedule and availability of training are adequate to meet my career ladder training or continuing education requirements.
3.78	0.77	5. Human resources policies and procedures are generally reasonable and easy to follow.
3.77	0.88	6. TAHC's increasing role in emergency management activities have been clearly defined to field staff.
3.75	0.77	7. Agency administrators are proactively addressing future prospects for agency functions since becoming bovine brucellosis free.
4.36	0.69	8. It is important for TAHC to position itself as a key player on the

<b>Avg</b>	<b>Std Dev</b>	<b>Question</b>
		US and international animal health scene.
3.55	0.95	9 The agency's current structure of field operations' areas and staffing is appropriate and effective.
379	0.93	10. The agency should begin to shift from a strong regulatory role toward a stronger customer service approach with producers ("we're here to help").
3.62	0.81	11. Central office, field, and laboratory staff respect and support each other's contributions to the agency's mission.
3.37	0.95	12. Our computer resources are reliable and productive.
3.37	0.94	13. My performance evaluation is a fair representation of my work and contributions to the agency mission.
3.50	1.08	14. My supervisor gives me constructive feedback on my performance throughout the year.
3.76	0.71	15. The public information office helps to make a positive impression for the agency.
3.80	1.17	16. My supervisor is honest and prompt in answering my questions and resolving my concerns.
3.26	1.04	17. TAHC is proactive in building employee morale through a positive communication style, training opportunities, and other supportive conditions of employment.
3.86	0.93	18. Overall, the positive aspects of working at TAHC generally outweigh the negative.